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INTOURIST

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Editorial

This number of the *Anglo Soviet Journal* is designed to mark the centenary of the birth of Lenin. We have tried to fill three gaps in our knowledge and understanding of his place in history. Given the vast literature on Lenin, what is new that can be said about him in 1970? The lecture by Dr. Maurice Dobb provides an assessment of him as a statesman and publicist written from the vantage point of 1970 and in the light of what has happened since his death. This lecture was delivered to a distinguished audience at the University of London on 23rd March, 1970, with some 250 members of the diplomatic corps, academic and public life, both Houses of Parliament, and a most welcome number of young people. Professor Spink introduced the lecture on the note that Dr. Dobb was someone who, like Lenin, had for 40 years always kept in the centre of this attention the welfare and happiness of his fellow men. We print the lecture in this issue in the knowledge that it will be welcomed by a larger audience than was present at its delivery and in response to the request of those who were present that they should be given an opportunity to read and digest its closely woven argument.

The Soviet Ambassador at the reception after the lecture emphasised the close ties between our two countries that Lenin personified. His appreciation of the experience of Britain in developing the first modern industrial system and the first organised labour movement helped directly in the transformation of Tsarist Russia into a rapidly industrialised Soviet system.

How little this was appreciated at the time in this country is demonstrated in the article by Mr. Ogden in which he discusses the British press commentary on Lenin. This article helps towards the understanding of the many problems that beset relations between the young Soviet State and this country.

Dr. Crome's article on the death of Lenin also fills a gap in our knowledge. Though it may present some technical problems for the understanding by the layman we are happy to print it as a piece of scholarly work.

A major gap we would have liked to try to fill is in the intellectual biography of Lenin. Dr. Dobb says that (with what Dr. Hobsbawm characterised in his vote of thanks at the lecture as quite unjustified modesty) he is not competent to comment on Lenin's achievements as a philosopher. The enormous literature about Lenin in English helps very little in this direction. The French, with their traditional concern for the history of ideas, have made some recent significant steps towards the elucidation of Lenin's intellectual development. Professor Garaudy produced a short sketch of some 60 pages in his book on Lenin published by Presse Universitaire de France in 1968. This was reviewed in a detailed article by Jean-Jacques Goblot, entitled " Sur la biographie intellectuelle de Lenine " in *La Pensée*, No. 143, 1969. (The article has been published in a Russian translation in *Voprosy Filosofii*, No. 1, 1970.) It would be impossible to summarise briefly the content of this article but two points from it call for mention. The author notes that it is Lenin's unjustified modesty in his early writings, when he asserts that he had little competence in philosophy, that led many, including Garaudy, to conclude that his early intellectual development was impeded by his poor knowledge of philosophy. In fact, there is evidence to show that by the time of his exile he had read and understood a wide range of philosophical works. Goblot argues that what characterised Lenin's intellectual development was what Dr. Dobb described as his increasing "passion for realistic assessment of the world."

Lenin

Dr. Maurice Dobb

(Text of a lecture in commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of Lenin's birth—given under the auspices of the S.C.R. at the University of London, March 23rd, 1970.)

It has now become a commonplace, half-a-century and more after the October Revolution, to say that Lenin and his ideas have changed the face of the 20th century world more profoundly than the events of 1789 in France changed 19th century Europe. In the latter, curiously, no single figure stood out in the way that Lenin's did in 1917 and its sequel: a cluster of figures, rather, in 18th century France crossing the stage to catch the spotlight for a while and then passing into the shadows if not into the wings. Yet despite the compelling vigour of Lenin's personality, few names in history can have less sought the trappings of greatness or done less to encourage a 'personality cult' around himself. You may recall in this connection Krupskaja's appeal of 1924 (*Pravda*, Jan. 30, 1924): "Do not allow your mourning for Ilyich to take the form of external reverence for his person. Do not raise memorials to him, palaces named after him, solemn festivals in commemoration of him: to all this he attached so little importance in his life, all this was so burdensome to him . . . If you wish to honour [him], build crèches, kindergartens, houses, schools, libraries, hospitals, and most of all let us put his precepts into practice." Maxim Gorki's comment was: "The simplicity and straightforwardness of everything he said was an essential part of his nature. The heroic deeds which he achieved are surrounded by no glittering halo." If I may be forgiven the bathos—in a lecture 30 years ago I find I said that "the secret of his influence was . . . that he could be part of the mass and lead at the same time: it was not a pose with him, but of his nature, to be the leader of a State of 160 million who wore a cloth cap."

To quote one more tribute with a rather different emphasis: Bernard Shaw once said of him that "although he was a man among other men, men of exceptional intelligence, remarkable energy and political skill, some of whom surpassed him in one respect or another and to whom he owed a great part of his work—yet he towered in the midst of this group of eminent men as a unique personality. I cannot explain this. I only know that in

England where nothing was known of him he seemed as great as in Russia where much was known of him."

The details of his birth and biography are too well-thumbed by now to bear repeating at any rate before this audience. They should be, even if they are not literally, familiar to every schoolboy. All I will do is to remind you that the anniversary now being celebrated is of his birth on April 22nd, 1870, at Simbirsk (as it then was) on the Volga, his father Ulyanov being a provincial inspector of education (and formerly Senior Physics Master at the Penza College of Gentry) and his mother a doctor's daughter. What should, perhaps, be attempted here is the more difficult task of trying to say something, in summary, about his ideas in relation to the manner of their application, with perhaps a few indications of their relevance today. Here I shall make no attempt to separate economic ideas from political, if only because in his thinking they were constantly intertwined.

The essential framework of his thinking (one need scarcely say) derived from Marx. Yet he was far from content to treat the Marxian classics as a set of final texts for Biblical quotation. They were to be developed and supplemented in the light of historical experience: above all, they were viewed by him as a guide towards practical activity; and implementation by activity in making history required, not just faithful interpretation, but critical initiative and capacity for innovation, as well as eyes and ears for contemporary fact—a 'feel' for new situations. His own attitude to his forbears' doctrines deserved more imitation than it was destined to receive after his death. "We do not regard Marx's theory", he wrote in 1899, "as something final and inviolable; on the contrary, we are convinced that it has only laid the foundation stone of the science which socialists *must* advance in all directions if they want to keep pace with life. We think that an *independent* elaboration of Marx's theory is especially necessary for Russian socialists since his theory provides only general *guiding* principles, which in *particular* are to be applied differently" in different countries. (It will be in keeping with the spirit of this, I hope, if I explain that although I am using quite a lot of quotation, my intention is to point and illustrate *attitudes* and not to contribute to a red book of quotations to suit every occasion).

Development of Capitalism

This notion of "*independent* elaboration" is well exemplified in his early work on *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* undertaken during his Siberian exile with Krupskaya—the time when he was also translating the Webbs' *Industrial Democracy* (the former in the mornings and the latter "after dinner" at Shushenskoye). His passion for realistic assessment is here strikingly in evidence.

A principal intention of this work was to show (as against the Narodniki) that Capitalism was developing in Russia, and that despite the *obshchina*, traditional institution of Russian peasant economy, the familiar process of social differentiation among the peasantry, from which bourgeois relations develop, was already well advanced. It is here, incidentally, that he pays a tribute to "the progressive historical work of capitalism, which destroys the age-old isolation and seclusion of systems of economy (and consequently, the narrowness of intellectual and political life), and which links all countries of the world into a single whole." But apart from its central argument, so crucial for interpretation of the Russian situation and its future development, what is striking about this work is the richness of concrete detail contained in it, the devoted attention to factual particulars, as exemplified in the careful use of the Zemstvo statistics of the time. Special attention was paid to the shape and variety of specific transitional forms between serfdom and wage-labour and their direction of movement; many of them representing "patriarchal social relations enmeshed in all sorts of survivals of mediaeval tradition." Incidentally, it is in this context that we meet his much-quoted aphorism about capitalism being a form of commodity-production in which labour-power itself has become a commodity. Need one add that the work is not mainly descriptive? Although attention to fact is so evidently treated as an overwhelming obligation, this is closely joined with intense feeling for the historical setting and harnessed to *interpretation*, with a view to practical action, as the dominating *motif* of the whole.

Imperialism

Much better known in this country, as "independent elaboration of Marx's theory", is his famous study of *Imperialism* of twenty years later. This, as you know, had as its sub-title 'The Highest Stage of Capitalism' and was concerned to generalise and isolate (in the sense of emphasising) those features that were especially *new* in contemporary capitalism, by contrast with capitalism, in its earlier 19th century phase. Lenin was not ashamed to build on the work of J. A. Hobson and Hilferding and to acknowledge his indebtedness. The crucial qualitative change in the structure of capitalism that he singled out was the supersession of competition by monopoly: itself a product of the Marxian tendency towards progressive concentration and centralisation of capital. With this came enhanced conflict—conflict between the new giants of capital—with new and more destructive weapons and on a greatly enhanced scale. "Domination and the violence associated with it (he wrote), these are the relationships most typical of the latest phase of capitalist development; this is what must inevitably result, and has resulted, from the formation of all-powerful economic monopolies."

This domination and violence did not contain itself within national frontiers but extended outward to annex territory in less developed areas, whether as 'spheres of influence' for privileged concessions and investment or as sources of raw material supplies, aided by the merging of industry with the banks and by the political influence exerted by large concentrations of capital over the machinery and policies of national States. Whence the conjunction of dominance by monopolies with export of capital, and the scramble of colonialism for division of the world among the leading capitalist Powers, with war as its sequel. Published as this was during the carnage of the First World War its topical reference was obvious and immense. Within two decades, the main lineaments of this new epoch of capitalism as he depicted it had become almost a commonplace. In U.S.A. the well-known Berle and Means investigation had revealed the extraordinary degree of concentration of ownership of industrial capital and its prospective increase, and on the eve of the Second World War a Rooseveltian special Commission of the U.S. Senate was issuing a series of voluminous reports on the Concentration of Economic Power (as it was officially named). During the '50s and '60s the problem of the so-called 'Third World', with colonialism, old and 'neo-', and the contrast between development and underdevelopment, has held priority of attention and discussion.

He made the incidental remark in speaking of imperialism as a new epoch of capitalism that this has "its place in history" as "the transition from the capitalist system to a higher social-economic order"—words which written at the time they were could be regarded as, indeed, prophetic. When we come to his view of this transition, the two sets of ideas that are usually regarded as outstandingly characteristic of him are those on the State (in particular his uncompromising remarks on 'smashing the apparatus of the Bourgeois State', with his view of the State's role in the transition to socialism) and those on the nature and function of the Party. I propose to treat them in that order, although if one were keeping strictly to chronological order, they should be reversed.

The State

The State and Revolution, containing the essence of his contribution on the subject, was also a product of the period of the First World War; it was indeed written only a month or two before the October Revolution, for which it might be called the theoretical recipe and manifesto. The thumbbed and tattered copy of the English translation, dated 1919 (published jointly by the B.S.P. of London and the S.L.P. of Glasgow), old fashioned in format and typeface, and priced at one-and-six, still holds for me the peculiar

aroma of those tense years, of ardent meetings in dimly-lit back-street halls and vociferous Albert Hall rallies chanting 'Hands off Russia'. It has to be remembered that all his writing of this period had as backcloth the action of the leaders of the Second International in going over to patriotic support of their own governments in 1914, including even those who still spoke as Marxists like Kautsky, friend of Engels in his day. To denounce them and their ideas, lest their continuing influence should stop the revolution in mid-course by stressing the continuity of political institutions, was accordingly a constant preoccupation. It is possibly not remembered as well as it should be that in speaking of the State as "organ of domination by a particular class", Marx and Engels had had in mind particularly (though perhaps not exclusively) the repressive organs of the executive arm. It was certainly these repressive organs that Marx had in mind in his much-quoted references to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat as the form of transition: a term which, incidentally, has been much misinterpreted from all sides owing to failure to appreciate that Lenin like Marx used it in the same sense as he spoke of bourgeois States as being "in essence" and "in the last analysis", "the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie", despite the political *forms* of that State being (as he put it) "exceedingly variegated" (in other words, he was *not* using 'dictatorship' in the sense of the customary antithesis between alternative political *forms*, to denote one of these forms by contrast with others: Parliamentary democracy could be a form of class-dictatorship in his sense as much as a military autocracy or Colonels' junta). What was new in Lenin's treatment was his insistence that the existing State, in view of its class character, could not itself be used to carry through a social revolution (with just a change of Ministers and Chief Secretaries at the top). This existing machinery had to be broken up, at any rate so far as its 'repressive organs' were concerned; its personnel changed and new democratic organs responsive to mass opinion had to be created and administration subordinated to these. Such new organs (giving opportunity for "active participation in administration" for the first time of "the great majority of the population") he was, of course, to see in the Soviets, spontaneously created as these were by the events of 1905 and again in the spring and summer of 1917.

What he had in mind here is shown very clearly in Chapter III of *State and Revolution* where he is talking about Marx's analysis of the experience of the Parish Commune. He starts from two statements of Marx: that the Commune demonstrated that "the working class cannot simply seize the available ready-made machinery of the State and set it going for its own ends", and that destruction of "the military and bureaucratic machinery of the State is 'the preliminary condition of any real *people's* revolution'."

Arguing against Bernstein he says : “Bernstein simply cannot conceive the possibility of voluntary centralism . . . [he] can imagine centralism only as something from above, to be imposed and maintained solely by means of bureaucracy and militarism.” He then quotes Marx again on the Commune to the effect that “the problem consisted in this : whilst amputating the purely repressive organs of the old Governmental power, to wrest its legitimate functions from an authority which claims to be above society, and to hand them over to the responsible servants of society.” To this he adds his own comment as follows : “We are not utopians, we do not indulge in dreams of how best to do away *immediately* with all management, with all subordination : these are anarchist dreams based upon a want of understanding of the tasks of the proletarian dictatorship . . . [and] serve only to put off the Socialist revolution ‘until human nature is different’. No, we want the Socialist revolution with human nature as it is now : human nature itself cannot do without subordination, without control, without managers and clerks.” And then, after saying that “we must organise production on a large scale, starting from what has already been done by Capitalism”, and from the need to create iron self-discipline, he speaks of administrative organs like the Post Office in these terms : “The mechanism of social management is here already to hand. We have but to overthrow the capitalists . . . to break the bureaucratic machine of the modern State—and we have before us a highly technically-fashioned machine freed of its parasites, which can quite well be set going by the workers themselves, hiring their own technical advisers, their own inspectors . . .” Elsewhere (in *Can the Bolsheviks Retain Power?*) he refers to “a machinery in the modern State . . . fulfilling a great mass of work of accounting and recording”, in addition to the preponderantly “repressive machinery” : this he explicitly says “cannot and must not be broken up”, but simply “freed from subjection to the capitalists” and “subjected to the proletarian Soviets”. (Again in another place he mentions the big banks as “that State apparatus which we need for the realisation of socialism and which we take ready-made from capitalism : our task here is merely to lop off what capitalistically disfigures this otherwise excellent apparatus to make it even larger, even more democratic”; adding indeed that “without the Banks Socialism could not be realised”).

Democracy

Later in *State and Revolution*, in a chapter that may well be more familiar than the one from which I have just quoted, after underlining and elaborating Marx’s distinction between the higher and lower stages of socialism, he has this significant statement : “We set ourselves, as our final aim, the task of the destruction of

the State, that is, of every organised and systematic violence, every form of violence against man in general." This perspective he clearly identified with transition to the higher of the two stages distinguished by Marx, namely Communism. Only then will the State become "absolutely unnecessary"; "only then will be possible and will be realised a really full democracy, a democracy, without any exceptions." During the transition to this, however, since "suppression of the minority of exploiters . . . is *still* necessary", the State is still necessary; but (let it be noted) "this is now a transitional State, no longer a State in the ordinary sense of the term": one, moreover, that will "certainly create a great variety and abundance of political forms". Hence it is clearly envisaged that even this first stage "will, for the first time, produce a democracy for the people, for the majority, side by side with the necessary suppression of the minority constituted by the exploiters", and "once the majority of the people *itself* suppresses its oppressors . . . a 'special force' for suppression is *no longer necessary*" so that "in this sense the State *begins to wither away*" (italics in the original). Indeed, "The proletarian State will begin to die away immediately after its victory". From all this it is evident that the latter is envisaged as a *process* of democratisation starting from a quite early date. I think you will agree that this is all a more finely modulated and many-sided conception, as well as essentially more democratic, than some of the interpretations that have been current have represented it to be.

Krupskaia, incidentally, tells us that "it is no mere chance that when Vladimir Ilyich referred to questions of democracy he always remembered Chernyshevsky, from whom he first learned of the *combined* struggle for democracy and Socialism"; and that he expressly treated the Soviet system as being "the most profoundly and consistently democratic system" (because it involved the real *participation* of the masses).

Bureaucracy

This may be the place to say something about Lenin's views, more generally, on the subject of bureaucracy. It is clear that the dangers of re-emerging bureaucracy, and the need to struggle against it, were a constant preoccupation and anxiety of his final years. He had frequently spoken of the need to end the separation of the legislative and executive arms characteristic of the bourgeois State; and the Party programme of 1919 had advocated direct participation in some defined 'administrative task' of all members of Soviets and "a gradual drawing of the whole working population into individual work in the administration of the State." In those early years the danger of bureaucracy was associated with the presence in the apparatus of 'bourgeois specialists' and personnel,

whose employment (moreover, at special salaries) Lenin himself, with characteristic realism, had advocated. Control over them and their methods and the education in administrative work of new proletarian elements, combined with a rise in the general level of popular culture, were seen as the safeguard and cure. For a time, apparently, he relied largely, if not mainly, upon the Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection as an anti-bureaucratic instrument; but this body failed to fulfil the high hopes placed upon it. Alternatively reliance was placed on control by the Party over the functioning of administrative organs. But the danger did not come only from 'bourgeois specialists' and *chinovniki*. One of his 'Three Principal Enemies' in a speech of Lenin to political education departments was "Communist vanity" of one "who imagines he can solve all problems by issuing Communist decrees". On another occasion he bluntly told Communist administrators that their "first duty was to be on guard against bossing"; adding that "we must learn to be modest." At the time of his death the problem remained; and whether its character has changed or not, it can hardly be said to have come nearer to solution—rather the contrary. One cannot resist wondering what his attitude might have been today, with socialism at a so much more developed level but with issues of centralisation *versus* decentralisation, economic and political, very much to the fore. It would, no doubt, be as idle to speculate about this as it would have been for him to forecast in 1923 whether the problem of bureaucracy was likely to become an increasing preoccupation with the growth of socialism or to find its solution and to diminish as he manifestly held that ideally it should do. One may make one's own guess at an answer to such a question; but it is scarcely the place to enlarge on this here.

Party

His idea of the new type of Party that was needed can be dealt with more shortly, perhaps, because it is more familiar. Yet there are some misconceptions (as I regard them) of this too that deserve at least mention. This idea goes back, as you all know, to the crucial 2nd Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party in 1903 (meeting first in Brussels and then adjourned to London), when the division into Bolshevik and Menshevik originated over the apparently trivial issue of the wording of a clause about Party membership in a draft Statute. This conception of what a revolutionary party ought to be and how it should be organised rested on the firm belief that proletarian revolution could only come from revolutionary seizure of power by an organised and politically conscious vanguard, acting in the name, and with the backing, of the popular masses, in particular of the working class. This was true at any rate in Russian conditions; and I think he can be said

to have held it to be true at the time of most other countries as well; this, indeed, being one of the conclusions drawn from the concentration of economic power and the nature of the State in the epoch of Imperialism. Hence the need for a disciplined and centralised close-knit body, intimately linked with the masses through day-to-day agitational activity, which could take the initiative and give the necessary leadership at the moment of crisis. In this context, the term 'vanguard' was fashioned and employed to mean the politically conscious among a class, capable of decisive action when those it represented might be lacking in perspective and scarcely conscious as yet of anything more than immediate, limited and sectional ends—what Marx called "a class in itself" as distinct from "for itself." (One might be tempted here to use the term *élite* had not this become such a shuttlecock-*cliché* of modern sociological debate). This notion is often dismissed as just another conspiratorial organisation; and in its day critics taunted him with deriving inspiration from Bakunin rather than from Marx—even from Blanqui. But there is really nothing 'Latin-American' about it (if I may use that tag). In this, as in other things, Lenin was both realistic and flexible in relation to changing situations. While in a situation like October 1917 such an organisation must be suited for illegal, and even military, action, it must at the same time (as he repeatedly urged) take advantage of every legal possibility that democratic institutions afforded. (It is well-known that in 1908 he argued against those who urged a boycott of the Duma and after 1917 composed his polemic against 'Left-wing Communists' who in their revolutionary purity had no use for Parliament or the 'nonsense of elections'.) Moreover, while prepared at times like October to take decisive action *on behalf* of the masses, he held that such a party must not stand *apart* from or over the masses: it must be an integral part of the mass and concerned in its day-to-day 'partial demands' and strivings, while co-ordinating and leading at the same time. Thus, it should not, I think, be conceived of, properly speaking, as something opposed to and contrasted with the democracy of rank and file activity and initiative nor as an authoritarian organisation with a one-way downward flow of ideas and orders—this was a much later accretion. True, of course, the whole conception was very much coloured by the situation of Tsarist Russia at the time: backward politically as well as economically. But I think it is true also, and has to be remembered, that he was concerned to oppose his conception to that of Western Social-Democratic Parties of which he evidently felt the weakness and inadequacy even before the events of 1914 revealed their Achilles' heel. Of the rôle of Lenin's Party in the crucial months and weeks of 1917 the present Master of Balliol (Christopher Hill) once had this to say: "In Russia in 1917 it was the Bolshevik mastery of the

fact that was decisive. The party knew exactly what it wanted, what *concrete* concessions to make to different social groups at any given stage, how to convince the masses of the population by actions, its own and their own. The party's organisation allowed great flexibility of manoeuvre, combined with firmness and strength in pursuit of the clearly envisaged ultimate objective."

Of his philosophical views, in particular his polemical work against the Machists (precursors of the later Vienna School), *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, I am not competent to speak, and must pass on to later and more strictly economic matters.

Building Socialism

It is when we come to his ideas in the post-October period—ideas about the transition and about the practical tasks of building socialism—that we meet what future historians are likely to find not only of key significance for interpretation but also of striking historical novelty. Here it was that his realistic appreciation of actual situations and his undogmatic respect for what experience teaches particularly comes to the fore. Although H. G. Wells once dubbed him "dreamer in the Kremlin", he was far from being utopian or romantic about the means and modes of building socialism—this perhaps being not unconnected with his having reacted against romantic Narodnik ideas from the time of his brother's execution which had moved him so deeply when he was still a schoolboy. (He was, surely, not a romantic who could tell Clare Sheridan, the sculptress, that her figure of Victory was "too beautiful"—"in reality victory was not like that.") E. H. Carr has written, in the first chapter of his monumental history: "If, however, Lenin was a great revolutionary—perhaps the greatest of all times—his genius was far more constructive than destructive . . . Lenin's major achievement came after the bloodless victory of the revolution in October 1917 and was that of a great constructive statesman." Not only was he insistent in these early days upon the need to cement the *smychka* with the peasantry by bringing the Left S. R's into the government and adopting the 1917-18 Land Reform, but he insisted also on the need to utilise bourgeois technicians and specialists and to introduce order and discipline into industry by means of administrative co-ordination and responsible one-man management; and this at a time when a rash of syndicalist experiments in taking over factories by 'spontaneous' action 'from below' was in train—spontaneous occupation of factories just as some weeks earlier peasants on their own initiative had taken over landlords' estates and divided these among themselves. Moreover, in the spring of 1918 he proclaimed the urgent need for making peace with Germany, even at the cost of the sacrifices involved in signing the humiliating and imposed Treaty

of Brest-Litovsk—this as opposed to the ‘Leftist’ perspective of ‘revolutionary war’. Likewise, at a quite early stage in the reconstruction process he saw the need for economic incentives in the form of wage-differentials and payment-by-results at a time when fashionable sentiment favoured egalitarianism and ‘shock’ propaganda-drive methods of getting things done.

New Economic Policy

But no doubt the outstanding example of his vision and constructive statesmanship was his scrapping of ‘War Communism’ at the end of the civil war and foreign intervention and his introduction of the New Economic Policy. In doing so he declared that “war communism was thrust upon us by war and ruin. It was not nor could it be, a policy that corresponded to the economic tasks of the proletariat. It was a temporary measure.” And again, it was a “mistake”, “a jump”, “in complete contradiction to all we wrote concerning the transition from capitalism to socialism”. “The tactics adopted by the capitalist class were to force us into a desperate and ruthless struggle which compelled us to smash up the old relationships to a far larger extent than we at first intended.” This is a witness, not only to his political courage and vision, but also to his immense moral influence; since it is doubtful whether any other political figure could have carried opinion in advocating such a change at the time. As it was, there was evidently considerable opposition in the localities to the new turn; a revealing glimpse of which comes in one of Paustovsky’s autobiographical volumes about Odessa, where the provincial committee had intended to suppress the terms of Lenin’s speech on NEP, and how the staff of a local seamen’s paper privily at night stole the type-forme of it from the provincial committee’s headquarters and printed it in their own paper. The fact that this reversion to NEP, and to outlawed words like trade and commodity-production and balance-sheets, was a resumption of the mode and style of transition that Lenin himself had been urging in the early post-October months does not diminish the insight and political courage of initiating the switch of policy at that time. Indeed, one shudders to think what the sequel might have been if it had been left to someone of less incisiveness and less moral influence to advocate the change against the stream of contemporary beliefs and opinion.

What this change amounted to should perhaps be explained for those unfamiliar with that half-century-old period. War Communism had been not only a highly centralised system, whereby factories were allocated their needed supplies of materials and fuels, sometimes even rations for their workers, and their outputs were centrally collected and reallocated, but it also became in the main a moneyless economy (partly of necessity from galloping war-time

inflation, but also sanctified, after the event, by appropriate doctrine as an anticipation of true communism). From an early stage it involved forcible requisitioning of peasant produce to feed the army and the towns, and even obligatory planting and sowing quotas for peasant farms. The keynote of Lenin's new policy was the restoration to the peasant of the right to trade freely in his produce, subject only to the prior payment of a tax, first in kind and subsequently converted into a money payment. Thus it was a re-establishment at its economic base of the *smytchka* or alliance between working class and peasantry which had already formed the cornerstone of the specifically Leninist conception of the social revolution in Russia, at any rate in its initial bourgeois-democratic phase.

Free trade on one side of the exchange-process between town and country had as logical complement the reversion of industry to commodity-production—production for sale in the market; and this in turn implied the penetration of money into the relations within industry itself. There was to follow rapid decentralisation whereby industry was reorganised into semi-independent enterprises or 'trusts', operating on the basis of the famous *khozraschot* and entering into contractual relations with other bodies in sale and purchase.

In an early article on the new policy he declared with the utmost frankness and realism: "The expression Socialist Soviet Republic means the determination of the Soviet Power to realise the transition to Socialism, and does not by any means signify that the present order is regarded as Socialist." By the new policy "we get a certain amount . . . of Free Trade, a revival of the *petite bourgeoisie* and Capitalism. This is undoubted, and to close one's eyes to it would be ridiculous." His answer was that, while "refrain[ing] from prohibiting and preventing the development of Capitalism", the State must "strive to direct it in the path of *State Capitalism*" and that in Russian conditions of the time "State Capitalism would be a step in advance of the present state of affairs", and would afford "the most complete material preparation for Socialism, the very threshold to it." In a pamphlet on the Tax (of April 1921) he spoke of "the possibility of assisting socialism by means of private capitalism (not to speak of State Capitalism)" to pass from War Communism to "the proper Socialist exchange of products." To hear these words today may make it all sound a very long time ago—which indeed it is, alike in clock-time and economic-historical time. But such words can still convey a lesson, *mutatis mutandis*.

Incidental to the main change there were others where his influence was decisive. There was the rôle assigned to trade unions, and at the same time emphasis on one-man management ("collective discussion but individual responsibility" was the phrase used). We

have already mentioned his recognition of the need for wage- and salary-differentials and for payment by results—he was never so simple-minded as to oppose so-called ‘material incentives’ to ‘moral’, and to suppose that a productive system can work (short of Marx’s ‘higher stage’ of Communism) upon the latter alone, as do some romantics on the Left today. On the contrary, he said (in 1921) that “the difficulty lies in creating personal incentives: we must give every specialist an incentive to become interested in the development of production.” “Every important branch of the national economy must be built upon the *principle* of personal incentive.” There was the need, not only to trade, including trade with the capitalist world, but to “learn from capitalists” how to trade: also to have a proper sense of historical relativity (e.g. to see that something could be progressive in one historical situation and the same thing be reactionary in another). To dogmatists on all such issues he retorted (in the above-quoted pamphlet on the Food Tax): “Less argument about words. More variety in practical experience and more study of this experience.”

Legacy of Lenin

The question is often asked what his reactions would have been to subsequent developments after his untimely death. This is not quite the nonsense-question that it might at first appear. What is meant here is: how far were later events consistent with his ideas about the advance to Socialism, or indeed (as some have claimed) part of the essential legacy of his ideas? Although there can be no such thing as an unequivocal answer, I do not see how one can entirely avoid this sort of question. Closely associated with it is the question whether or not he thought that the transition to socialism could be made in the backward conditions of Russia, requiring as this would a prior period of industrialisation and modernisation. This, as you know, has been a subject of keen controversy. Lenin evidently thought (and on at least one occasion virtually said so) that one of the conditions for a ‘normal’ and sure transition was the spread of socialist revolution to other European countries. This did not mean that he considered it to be otherwise impossible—on the contrary. But it seems likely (I suggest) that he would have conceived of such a transition as associated with a special cost—the cost not only of sacrifices but perhaps of ways and modes deviating from what he had previously envisaged as a ‘normal’ road of transition. Possibly he would have thought that part of this necessary cost was the development of a high degree of centralisation of the State apparatus and its administration of industry, coupled with a second ‘revolution from above’ in agriculture, endangering the *smychka*, such as was destined to follow during the next decade. What is surely much less likely (to put it

very mildly) is that he would have thought the same of the distortions of the so-called personality cult, the autocratic régime within the Party *plus* the monstrous police régime of Yezhov and Beria. This *surely* cannot be construed as in any way part of the legacy.

If after so much discussion of his ideas, and citation of what he said and wrote, I were to seek for a text as an anti-text to textual quotation, could I do better than his advice to Communists of the Caucasus in 1921? "Do not copy our tactics . . . but think out for yourselves the reasons why they assumed these peculiar features, the conditions that gave rise to them and their results: apply in your republics not the letter but the spirit, the sense, the lessons of the experience of 1917-21."

May I conclude this random survey with two personal glimpses, given us by Gorki and by Krupskaja respectively? In those dark days after the Revolution, haunted by hunger, counter-revolution and foreign intervention, Gorki used to go to Lenin to plead for individual hard cases among the ranks of the *ancien régime*. He relates that Lenin used to start by challenging him, even angrily, with such questions as: "Is it possible to act humanely in a struggle of such unprecedented ferocity? Where is there any place for soft-heartedness or generosity (when) we are being blockaded by Europe . . . (and) counter-revolution is creeping like bears upon us from every side?" "Yet (Gorki adds) I don't remember a single instance when any request of mine met with a refusal from Ilyich"; and on one occasion Lenin remarked thoughtfully and feelingly: "Yes, those people [the old aristocracy and gentry] are in great straits. History is a cruel stepmother, and when it retaliates, it stops at nothing. It is bad for those people." If this was his attitude to "those people", and to such as Gorki's Princess saved by the barking of her own dogs from drowning herself in the Neva, what would his attitude have been to a Revolution devouring its own children? Krupskaja's story relates to his attitude to young people, in particular to the impatient iconoclasm of the young—something which may perhaps strike a chord in us today. It was in the great famine-year of 1921 and Lenin and Krupskaja were visiting a Youth Commune of young art students, where they slept "almost on bare boards" and were without bread. Lenin was unusually well-read in classical Russian literature and enjoyed listening to music: in both his tastes were distinctly classical (he had once written: "in matters of culture haste and bustle are the worst possible things: many of our young writers and Communists should get this well into their heads"; and only the year before he had told the Comsomol that one could not become a Communist "without making one's own the treasures of human knowledge . . . the whole sum of human knowledge"). He asked these ardent youngsters of the art Commune what they read: did they read

Pushkin? Oh no, Pushkin was a bourgeois; they only read Mayakovsky. Lenin smilingly replied: "I think Pushkin is better." But he listened to them patiently and seriously—and Krupskaya adds that "after that Ilyich somewhat took to Mayakovsky... it reminded him of those young art students, full of life and joy, ready to die for the Soviets, and unable to find in the contemporary language words to express themselves, seeking this expression in Mayakovsky's rather obscure verse."

Some of you may regard these two anecdotes as inconsequential. I must say that I find them distinctly revealing.

What they said then

Dennis Ogden

Some Notes on Contemporary Comment About Lenin
in the British Press

A perusal of contemporary British press comment on Lenin is instructive, providing its own eloquent commentary on its standards of political judgement and objectivity. These notes discuss comment at the time of the event with which Lenin's name is primarily associated—the October Revolution of 1917—and also at the time of his death in January, 1924, when the British press gave what may be assumed to be a considered appraisal of his life and work in the form of editorials and obituaries.

"The Times"

On November 7, 1917, the very day on which the revolution was moving to its climax in Petrograd, the city now called Leningrad, *The Times* was carrying optimistic reports from the city of the Provisional Government's decision "vigorously to combat" the attempt of "the Maximalists" (as *The Times* for several days continued to call the Bolsheviks) to seize power. "M. Kerensky", it reported, "speaking of the Maximalist attempts to seize power and to provoke civil war, declared amidst applause from the Right and Centre and part of the Left:—'People who dare at this time to raise their hands against the will of the Russian people threaten at the same time to open the front to Germany. All acts of this kind will be suppressed immediately'."

But a significant fact was to be found in the form of a one-paragraph report obscurely placed under "Imperial and Foreign News Items":—"In the district of Ivanovo-Voznesensk, Moscow

Province, where there are a number of large textile factories, 300,000 workers have gone on strike."

But events in Russia were viewed almost exclusively in terms of the war against Kaiser Germany, then, as *The Times* reminded its readers at the head of its main news column, in its "4th Year : 96th Day". From France the news was "Ypres Ridge Stormed—Canadians Win Passchendaele" and, as on every other day, there were long lists of officer casualties. Nine months earlier, the British press had welcomed the overthrow of Tsarism and the accession to power of the Provisional Government because, in the words of *The Times* (16.3.1917), they believed it to be "A 'Win-the-War' Movement".

The British press, like the British Government, could not—would not—understand that the Provisional Government's attempt to continue waging a war which had already cost the Russian people a price far more terrible than that borne by any other nation spelt its own downfall. For the British press, talk of peace, be it in Russia or at home in Britain, was tantamount to treason and treachery, the product of German propaganda.

"The extreme wing of the Petrograd Soviet, under the leadership of the *pacifist agitator* Lenin, announces that it has deposed the Provisional Government" (italics mine—D.O.) began *The Times* report on November 9, 1917 under the headline "Anarchy in Petrograd—Power seized by Lenin". The paper went on to give the new Soviet Government's appeal for an "immediate democratic peace" and "the immediate handing over of the large proprietorial lands to the peasants."

"That the real Russia will ever consent to make a separate peace, or can acquiesce in all the extravagances of the Soviet manifestos, is impossible to believe", said a second leader. "We can only await the event, confident that in the end, the honour of Russia, her proved military valour, her instinct for decent and orderly life, will regain their proper influence."

The next day it was able to report a representative of its "real Russia"—the old regime's Ambassador in Paris—as confidently declaring that "the situation must be regarded seriously, but not tragically... The Maximalist Movement by its arbitrary action is already doomed. I have no doubt whatever that the movement will be stamped out by the first Cossack regiment that appears on the scene." Two days later—and already it was "Lenin Losing Control—Kerensky Marching on Petrograd—Cossack Support Claimed—Bolsheviks wavering" (12.11.1917).

But there was already a note of unease in the report of a tour of south Russia made by "Our Correspondent" and datelined Odessa. Hitherto, he wrote, the Russian peasant had played little role in the

life of their country "but their day is coming". All, he wrote, "are anxious for peace" and all desired land.

By November 19th *The Times* had to concede that "at present the Lenin-Trotsky combination is all-powerful... The extremists feel themselves firmly seated in the saddle, and there intend to ride the horse to the finish... Exemplary order is still being maintained".

But there was still no real understanding of what was happening in Russia, or of what Lenin stood for. On November 29th, 1917 it was the considered view of "Our Military Correspondent" that "Germany has occupied Petrograd vicariously by means of her Leninite friends", and on December 5th, a *Times* leader, under cover of talk about "German agents" and "German propaganda", foreshadowed the open armed intervention designed to overthrow the Soviet Government which was to follow within less than three months: "The rest of the Allies have not taken sides in the internal discussions which have convulsed Russia since the first days of the Revolution. They have now rightly repudiated Lenin and all that he stands for; *and they will certainly support any patriotic movement that seems likely to rescue Russia from the abyss into which she is falling...*" (italics mine—D.O.).

Other Papers

The *Daily Telegraph* was less inhibited. In the view of its Petrograd correspondent (9.11.1917) "if Lenin is not a deliberate traitor, he is a crazy visionary. The question which he is may still be left open, though his record is a bad one..." The *Telegraph* correspondent went on to say that Lenin "called himself Youlianoff, but it has been said that even that is an assumed name, and that his true patronymic is Cederbaum. If this is so, it brings him into more perfect harmony with his principle coadjutors, who call themselves Zinovieff, Kameneff, and Trotsky, but whose real names are Apfelbaum, Rosenfeld and Braunstein."

This note was still more pronounced in the *Daily Mail*, whose headline over an editorial on November 9th, 1917 read: "Another Upset in Russia—Zederblum, alias Lenin, Claims Power". It declared: "At the head of this new super-revolution is apparently M. Lenin (alias Zederblum) who not long since was wanted by the Russian police as a German-paid agent and Bolo..."

It should in parenthesis be noted that "Bolo" was not an abbreviation for Bolshevik. Bolo was a French newspaper proprietor said to have accepted German money and "Boloism" was what the *Daily Mail* (12.11.1917) described as "all the secret and subtle agencies by which Germany plays upon and corrupts opinion in foreign lands".

The November 9th editorial went on: "His right hand is M.

Trotsky (alias Braunstein), an Anarchist who has made most countries too hot for him . . . They have already issued a programme, the first article of which is 'the offer of an immediate democratic peace'. The second article, the division of large estates, is of little importance except as a catchphrase, since the land in most parts of Russia has already been seized by the peasants". The editorial concluded by declaring that "the Robespierres were not France, and the Lenins have no right to pose as representing Russia."

It took up this theme again on the following day in another editorial. Power in Russia, it said, had fallen into the hands of men "who are either, like Lenin, proved traitors and in the pay of Germany, or, like Trotsky, sheer Anarchists and bent on propaganda of class hatred and plunder. It is, of course, out of the question that the Allies should treat a pro-German, anti-British, and pro-peace Government so constituted as a friendly government. It is equally out of the question that the Russian people should tolerate it for long as their representative authority . . . The real Russia is patriotic. It longs for the return of law and order . . . The forces that make for reason and national health are gathering strength and the very viciousness of the new government will tend to work its own cure."

Two days later, on November 12th, the *Daily Mail* carried an article headed "Have Faith in Russia—The Truth About Lenin" by Lovat Fraser. This referred to Lenin as "a dangerous criminal and traitorous fanatic", and to "such rat-like denizens of the sewers as Lenin and Mr Braunstein and Mr Apfelbaum and Mr Rosenfeldt and Mr Gimmer and Mr Goldenberg, all of Petrograd . . ." Lenin, Lovat Fraser wrote, "had no real hand in making the Russian Revolution, which sprang from purer motives than he is capable of conceiving." Lenin, he said, was a "ridiculous little man with a squeaky voice who is trying to open the gates of Russia to the enemy."

The *Daily Express* saw the Revolution and Lenin in similar terms. "Pro-Germans Capture Russia—Demand Peace Now—Russia Reduced to Anarchy—New Revolution by Lenin, Chief of the Pro-Germans" declared its headlines on November 9th. An editorial on the same day headed "A German Victory" declared: "Lenin is the popular idol, and Lenin is the creature of Berlin. It is natural, therefore, that he should place an immediate peace in the front of his programme. An immediate peace must be a German peace . . ." The quality of its subsequent coverage may be judged from two items, one on November 12th headlined "Kerensky Dominant—Defeat of Lenin in Sight", and the second three days later, datelined Geneva, to the effect that Lenin had bought an £80,000 house in Petrograd, adding by way of explanation that Lenin had become rich at the end of 1914 thanks to German gold.

The death of Lenin

But the same paper's coverage of Lenin's death seven years later in January, 1924, was markedly different in tone. Its news report from its correspondent in Moscow was headed "Death of Lenin—Paralysing Blow to the Soviet—The Greatest Red—Who Will Succeed Him?" It speculated that the Soviet leader's death "may have tremendous consequences for Russia". It carried a "Personal Impression" of Lenin by Ambrose Lambert, the paper's former Moscow correspondent, headlined "Lenin, The Man of No Fear" in which he recalled how Lenin, despite assassination attempts, had frequently mingled freely with crowds. Lenin, he wrote, "not only appealed to the intellectuals and held sway by force of logic and farsightedness, but he also grappled the hearts of his followers as did no other leader in Russia." Lenin, he went on, "was a difficult man to interview, but, until his last illness, not a difficult man to see at close range . . . I was practically shoulder to shoulder with him tramping up and down a slushy, muddy field, just outside Moscow a year or so ago, watching the workings of a new electric tractor invented by a Russian . . . he was by no means impressive . . . his voice was clear and penetrating but level. He made no attempts at the operatics of oratory . . . an indefatigable worker . . . he lived a life of extreme simplicity".

The *Daily Mail's* reaction was likewise in marked contrast to its November, 1917 outbursts. Its news report—from Riga, the Baltic city where several British papers maintained "Moscow Correspondents" at that time—was headed "Death of Lenin—After Months of Helplessness—Business Effect in Russia—Bolshevism at the Crossroads". It carried an obituary note of some five or six paragraphs, in which particular mention was made of Lenin's stay in London while editing *Iskra*.

The attitude of *The Times*, however, remained unchanged. It carried a heavily slanted three-column obituary couched in strident terms: "a professional revolutionary and conspirator . . . knowing no compunction . . . never wrote a first-class scientific work. He was not primarily a theorist or writer, but a propagandist. For him articles and books were but a means to an end . . . a man of iron will and inflexible ambition, he had no scruple about means . . ." An editorial was in similar vein, declaring that Lenin "wrote much, but what he wrote was not a system of social philosophy or a new body of doctrine . . . (the) incoherent jumble of theories in his mind was simply the material for his own personal ambition". On the news page, "Our Correspondent" (also in Riga) declared that "it may be said with confidence that a disintegrating process has begun which will lead to the total collapse of the party. *The end is probably only a matter of months*" (italics mine—D.O.).

The *Daily Telegraph* had likewise remained unrelenting in its

shrill hostility. Lenin, said its editorial of January 23rd, 1924 "was the very arch-type of the academic political thinker, understanding books far better than men, solitary by taste, with the essence of humanity dried out of him . . . a miracle of bigotry, the Torquemada of a sapless and inhuman political creed." An obituary acknowledged his qualities of "will-power, courage, and entirely selfless devotion to a cause" and conceded that none of the "active enemies" of Bolshevism "had discovered the means to obtain a grip of popular sympathies"—but there was no realisation of the stature of the man who had succeeded where they had failed, or of why he had succeeded.

A *Manchester Guardian* second leader (23.1.1924) conceded that "evidently he (Lenin) was in some respects extraordinary, for his dynamic power in Russia cannot otherwise be accounted for." But it went on: "His success is all the more remarkable because the fundamental doctrine which he sought to spread is obsolete . . . Thus, Lenin, while vaguely regarded alike by his warmest admirers and by his bitterest enemies, as a politician extraordinarily 'advanced', was really far less advanced than, say, *Mr Ramsay MacDonald* . . ." (italics mine—D.O.).

It should, perhaps, be added that on the same day that they reported Lenin's death the British papers reported the formation of Britain's first Labour Government, of which Mr Ramsay MacDonald was Prime Minister. In 1931 this "advanced" politician was to form a "National" coalition government with the Conservatives.

The "Manchester Guardian"

But the *Manchester Guardian's* three-and-a-half column obituary was far removed from the facile philosophising of its leader page. Its Moscow Correspondent at this time was Arthur Ransome, whose pamphlet "The Truth About Russia" had a few years earlier played an important part in breaking down the propaganda curtain erected around events in Soviet Russia, and it was he who penned the obituary.

It gave a picture of a whole man—a picture clearly based on personal acquaintance. He wrote of Lenin's love of sport "which lasted till death. Even during the most difficult times of the Revolution Lenin used at week-ends to escape from the Kremlin and go off to the country around Moscow with his gun . . . Lenin's private life was simple and above reproach . . . he took considerable delight in washing dishes and minding the babies. People have written of his 'mirthless laugh'. Mirthless laughs are not infectious, and Lenin's was extremely so, except, perhaps, when he was amused by his actual interlocutor. The quality in him that was taken for coldness was the quality which makes some artists seem cold.

Lenin had the artist's 'amor fatae', and was never inclined to pretend to himself or to anyone else that he saw a happy ending where none was. He valued one virtue above all others, the ability to look facts clearly in the face... Nobody had anything against him personally, however much they might hate the Revolution as a whole."

Ransome traces Lenin's career from the early theoretical debates on the growth of capitalism in Russia, his early philosophical writings and the great debates within the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, the "dress rehearsal" of 1905 and the outbreak of the First World War. "Lenin did not say 'Down with War' but 'Down with *this* war, and begin the war which shall put an end to the system that made *this* war inevitable", he writes. Like for example the obituarists in *The Times* and the *Daily Telegraph*, he refers to the "sealed train" by which Lenin travelled across Germany in order to make his way back to Russia as speedily as possible after the overthrow of Tsarism. For them, who forgot (or never knew) that similar journeys were made by many Menshevik leaders, it is a peg for a smear; for Ransome, it is an opportunity for a neatly-turned but acute political assessment: "while journeying to revolution in Petrograd, he looked further ahead than the Germans to revolution in Berlin".

Ransome recalls that Lenin did not immediately after his return win the "unquestioned authority which he afterwards attained". But when the "final triumph" came, "he was the man who had urged the doing of what was now being done. He was the man who for a dozen years had prophesied precisely this event. He alone was ready with a definite programme."

Lenin "had been a revolutionary leader in obscurity. He was a revolutionary leader now", Ransome writes, going on to recall Lenin's "amusement" at being sometimes considered a "moderate". Says Ransome: "In Lenin has disappeared, not the leader of the moderates but the most resolute of the extremists, whose opportunism was not temperamental but, like the seeming opportunism of a general, dictated by the circumstances of the moment, without affecting in the slightest the general principles by which he was guided or the aim that was always before him... The key to the whole man is in his profound conviction that revolution is an inevitable process and not an artificial one. It never occurred to him that he or any other individual could 'make revolution' anywhere. He merely believed that revolution everywhere was inevitable sooner or later, and that as many people as possible should be ready for it when it came..."

The "Daily Herald"

The comments of the *Daily Herald*, now defunct but at that time

the only daily paper associated with the Labour movement (the *Daily Worker*, now the *Morning Star*, did not appear till 1930) have likewise stood the test of time. "When first it was known that a British high official in Russia called Lenin 'the greatest personality thrown up by the war', the judgement was derided. Now it is a commonplace", it declared editorially. An obituary article bearing the initials "W.N.E." (W. N. Ewer) said "this was one of the great men of history, a colossus of a man, towering above all his contemporaries . . . A great theorist, he refused to be bound by theories . . . Always and always he looked with piercing insight for the facts. Always he thought not of 'the masses' or of 'Russia' or of any of the metaphors dear to loose-thinking men, but of Ivan Pavlovitch, the moujik, or of Vassili Borisovitch, the factory worker. Always of men and women, whom he understood and millions of whom came therefore to love and trust him. His fearless honesty, his outspoken truth-saying when truth-saying was hard and unpopular; his absolute integrity; the simplicity of his private life; his deep sympathies; his mischievous sense of humour—all these won him the love of all who worked with him. Incomparably—agree or disagree with his policies, his methods, his views—he stands out in history as the greatest spokesman, the greatest leader that the working-class movement has yet known, as one of the greatest leaders the world has known."

No doubt the British press will mark the centenary of Lenin's birth. It will be interesting to compare what they say now with what they said then. No doubt, now as then, there will be those who will belittle and decry. But the fact that they still feel impelled to discuss what Lenin wrote, said and did a century after his birth and nearly 50 years after his death in itself testifies to the continuing significance and vitality of his ideas.

Illness and Death

L. Crome

Lenin's illness ran its downward course haltingly from late 1921 to January, 1924. These particular years marked a watershed in the history of the Soviet Union. The civil war had been won, the armies of intervention forced to withdraw, peace with Poland restored. The ruined country then staggered through one of the worst droughts and famines in its history. Repair, reconstruction and the building of the new society lay ahead. It was at this point that Lenin fell ill. Probably most people in the Soviet Union would still agree that at least some of the disasters that befell them on the uncharted road they took could have been avoided had Lenin lived longer.

Thousands of people met, saw or heard Lenin on one occasion or other during the last years of his life and it would seem that all who could but put pen to paper have recorded their impressions of him. The literature on Lenin is enormous. The Soviet biographical index for 1963 mentions, for example, 13,000 items. They include many reports, among them some by doctors, of Lenin's wounding in 1918 and the course of his terminal illness. Rather surprisingly, no one appears to have assembled all the known facts in a complete case record of Lenin's illness, and this has been one reason for writing this article.

Previous History

There is definite history of arteriosclerosis and consequent cerebrovascular disease in Lenin's family. His father, Il'ya Nikolayevich Ul'yanov, died from "cerebral haemorrhage" at 55 years, although the diagnosis was not confirmed by autopsy (Lenin himself was 54 when he died). His mother, Mariya Aleksandrovna Ul'yanova, née Blank, lived to be 82 but in her later years suffered also from arteriosclerotic brain disorder.

Lenin was one of seven children, one of whom died from an unknown cause in early infancy. In his youth he was especially attached to his sister Olga, who died from typhoid at the age of 19. All the others became revolutionaries. The oldest, Aleksandr, a zoology student, was executed when he was 21 years old for his complicity in a plot to kill the Tsar. His oldest sister, Anna, died in 1935 at the age of 71. The youngest sister, Mariya, looked after Lenin during the last years of his life and died in 1937, aged 59. His brother Dmitri was 69 when he died in 1943, and is said to have suffered from serious arteriosclerotic disease of the legs. Lenin's wife, Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya, was under constant treatment for Graves' disease, first diagnosed in Switzerland in 1904. This did not prevent her from leading a very active and full life.

Biographers agree that members of the family were at all times warm, friendly and happy with each other. Although revolutionary needs separated them widely in Russia and other countries, they always maintained contact by correspondence, helped each other—in freedom, prison or exile—and met whenever they could.

Lenin was born in Simbirsk on April 22nd, 1870. He appears to have been a sturdy, lively boy, and though he must have gone through the usual childhood ailments there is no mention of them in the biographies. In 1894 he suffered from pneumonia, from which he fully recovered. In 1903, when in London, a skin complaint developed, which his wife refers to as "sacred fire". This could have been herpes zoster or lichen planus. According to Krupskaya, they could not at the time spare a guinea for a consultation with a skin specialist and treated the rash themselves, rather distressingly, by

painting it with iodine.

Lenin was by all accounts a perfectly healthy man until his wounding in 1918. Although he took a legal degree at the age of 21 and even practised law for a time, his real vocation was, of course, that of a whole-time revolutionary, and most of his working life was spent reading and writing behind a desk. His collected works, when fully published, will comprise some 60 rather substantial volumes, an average of two per year of active life. On the other hand, he was exceedingly fond of the open air, walking and hunting. In Switzerland, for example, he would go over the mountains on long hikes or cycling tours with his wife.

As a young man he started to smoke, but his mother persuaded him to give it up and he never took to it again. He drank and ate sparingly.

His habits at home and work were punctiliously regular and methodical in contrast to those of some of his more bohemian associates. He loathed endless soul-searching talk in cafés or stuffy rooms, to which the others were prone, and every form of domestic or office disorder. He was, however, emotionally deeply involved not only in his work but in personal relations with his comrades. The frequent disagreements with them on questions of revolutionary theory and tactics hurt him deeply. On such occasions he was greatly disturbed and suffered from insomnia. It was difficult for him to get over such crises.

1918

Knowing what we do about the preoccupation of Soviet authorities with security in later years, it is astonishing to discover how slack they were in guarding Lenin in their early period. He could have been killed on at least three occasions. On January 14th, 1918, he escaped unhurt when numerous shots were fired at the back of his car, and one of the occupants, the Swiss communist Platten, was wounded in the hand. Lenin himself was shot and seriously wounded in August, 1918. Even so, he was allowed to go about again without adequate protection. His car was stopped by armed robbers in the suburbs of Moscow on 19th January, 1919. This time the robbers were only interested in money. They took all they found in the occupants' wallets and drove away the car.

On 30th August, 1918, Lenin addressed a workers' meeting at one of the Moscow factories. On leaving, in the courtyard, he opened the door of the car but stopped for a chat with one of the workers. Fanny Kaplan, a member of the socialist-revolutionary party, standing to the left and somewhat behind him, fired three shots from a gun, aiming apparently at his chest. Two of the bullets hit Lenin and the third the woman with whom he had been talking. The head of the Leningrad Cheka, Uritsky, was killed the same day, also by a member of the socialist-revolutionary party. Fotiyeva, one

of Lenin's secretaries, states that the bullets which hit Lenin had been poisoned by curare and nicked to make them explosive. There is nothing in the medical documents to substantiate this allegation. This rumour, among many others, may have gained currency when, following Lenin's wounding, the Soviet government decided to meet terror with terror against socialist-revolutionaries and others. A new turn in the needless and unwanted, but seemingly inevitable, spiral of merciless violence, repression and counter-repression that marked the Russian civil war was thus released. The central organisation of the socialist-revolutionaries has, incidentally, always continued to deny its complicity in the attack on Lenin.

Lenin fell to the ground but was able to rise and get into the car. The workers around him told the driver to go to the nearest hospital, but he decided to proceed instead as quickly as possible to Lenin's flat in the Kremlin. He explained later that he did so out of fear that the attack on Lenin might have signified the start of a general insurrection, and that it would therefore not have been safe to take him to an unknown and unguarded place. In the Kremlin Lenin was able to mount the stairs but collapsed on entering his flat. There was no first aid material at hand but Dr. Velichkina, the wife of the permanent secretary, Bonch-Bruyevich, gave him an injection of morphia. Two other doctors, Dr. Obukh and Dr. Veisbord, were soon on the scene and were joined by a surgeon, Professor Mints. Another surgeon, V. N. Rozanov, arrived a little later. Subsequently Rozanov published an excellent account of the medical aspects of the wounding.

One of the bullets had fractured the left humerus at the junction of its upper third and lower two-thirds and lodged deep in the infrapinnous muscle of the scapula. The other bullet also entered the left arm, traversed the apex of the left lung, passed in front of the vertebral column, just missing the left subclavian and common carotid arteries, and lodged rather superficially, behind and above the right sternoclavicular joint.

Lenin's condition was at first very grave. Haemothorax (effusion of blood in the pleural cavity) developed on the left side and the heart was displaced considerably to the right. Another colleague, Professor N. I. Mamonov, joined the doctors the following day and it was decided to treat the patient conservatively by absolute rest and not to attempt extraction of the bullets. On the third day Lenin began to improve and the arm was placed in an extension splint. He was able to get up after three weeks, and following that felt only slight pain along the course of the radial nerve. A removable splint was applied and the patient sent to convalesce in Gorki (now renamed Leninskiye Gorki, a country house 20 miles from Moscow).

Some time after recovery Lenin made up his mind to pay the doctors. Anticipating that they would refuse to accept a fee from

any of the officials, he decided to hand it over himself. It must have been a curious episode : Lenin thrusting an envelope with the honorarium on the reluctant and embarrassed Rozanov. In the end the matter was resolved to mutual satisfaction, Lenin undertaking to meet a few of the doctors' modest non-pecuniary requests.

Early Symptoms

The early symptoms of Lenin's illness set in slowly and insidiously. Throughout 1920 he went on working at full pressure but complained of headaches, and in a speech he made in December of that year admitted openly that he was not feeling well.

Nineteen twenty-one and the first half of 1922 were, perhaps, the most ill-omened of early Soviet history. The country was struck by the already mentioned famine. By the end of the winter of 1921-1922, 37 million people were actually starving; nobody knows how many perished. 1921 was the year of the Kronstadt mutiny, of the introduction of the controversial New Economic Policy, and of the appearance of the first serious dissension in the communist party in the shape of the so-called workers' opposition. Lenin, as prime minister and the head of the party, shouldered as heavy a burden as ever, working at times up to and more than 16 hours a day. Occasionally, however, he felt completely exhausted and would then rest at Gorki. In addition to the exhaustion he was troubled by headaches and insomnia. According to one of his physicians, Professor Osipov, he would also halt occasionally when out hunting and rub his right foot and, when questioned why he did so, reply that "it must have gone to sleep". (Professor Osipov does not mention the time of onset of this symptom.)

In July, 1921 he developed hyperacusis manifested as a startle reaction to the sound of the telephone bells in his study. Flashing lights were substituted for them. The insomnia became more troublesome and he obtained, apparently, little relief from drugs.

In March, 1922 he was seen by a number of doctors, including the German physician, Professor Felix Klemperer, and the neurologist, Otfried Foerster. No evidence of organic brain disease was detected at the time and he was advised to rest for a few months in Gorki. Klemperer returned to Berlin on April 3rd and was interviewed for the *New York Times*. According to Klemperer, Lenin suffered only from "moderate neurasthenia—the result of overwork".

On April 6th Ordzhonikidze suggested to Lenin a trip to one of the southern health resorts and, although some preliminary enquiries were made, nothing came of it, probably because Lenin did not want to be so far away from Moscow.

Somewhat bizarre events took place towards the end of April, and these are recounted as follows by Professor Rozanov.

.. "In the evening of 20th April I was rung up by N. A. Semashko

(the Minister of Health—L.C.), who asked me to call on Vladimir Il'yich the following day : Professor Borchardt was coming for a consultation from Berlin, as it was necessary to extract the bullets from Vladimir Il'yich. I was terribly puzzled by this and asked why. Nikolai Aleksandrovich told me that Vladimir Il'yich had been having headaches lately and that a consultation had taken place with Professor Klemperer (a well known German professor—a physician). Klemperer expressed the view, apparently with some firmness, that the headaches were caused by the bullets remaining in the body of Vladimir Il'yich, allegedly producing lead poisoning. To me, as a surgeon who had seen thousands of wounded, such a suggestion seemed very strange, and I said so to Nikolai Aleksandrovich. He agreed, but all the same one had to attend the consultation.

The consultation proved interesting. I called for Borchardt and we drove together to the Kremlin. A lady doctor, whose name I do not recall and who was to act as interpreter, came with us. We were shown straight into Vladimir Il'yich's study and he joined us at once, shook hands, told the interpreter she would not be needed : 'We'll manage on our own', and invited us to his flat. He described to us briefly but very exactly his headaches and the consultation with Klemperer. When Vladimir Il'yich said that Klemperer had recommended the extraction of the bullets Borchardt's eyebrows went up in surprise and he dropped 'unmöglich', but then corrected himself, evidently in order not to lower the prestige of his Berlin colleague, and began to speak of some sort of new tests for this purpose.

I said firmly that the bullets had nothing to do with the headaches, that this was impossible since the bullets would have been enveloped in a thick fibrous capsule through which nothing could pass to the organism. The bullet in the neck over the right sternoclavicular joint was easily palpable, its extraction seemed easy, and I did not oppose its removal, but I objected categorically against the extraction of the bullet in the left shoulder : that one was embedded very deeply and so the search for it would have been difficult; it, like the first one, gave Vladimir Il'yich absolutely no trouble. Vladimir Il'yich agreed with this and said : 'Well, if it's one, let's get on with it, so that they stop pestering me with all their new suggestions'.

We arranged to check the position of the bullets by X-rays at Professor Lazarev's Institute of Physics. On screening they were seen perfectly, having shifted slightly compared with the position immediately after the wounding. We made several exposures from different angles. After this Vladimir Il'yich went with P. P. Lazarev to look at the Physics Institute, but nothing came of the visit as, on reaching the room where P. P. Lazarev had collected data on the

Kursk anomaly,* Vladimir Il'yich insisted on Lazarev acquainting him with this material in the most detailed manner. Vladimir Il'yich listened very attentively, asked many questions and became clearly most absorbed in the problem. On leaving, Vladimir Il'yich asked Lazarev to keep him fully informed on further developments.

We agreed to carry out the operation the following day, 23rd April, in my hospital, and that Vladimir Il'yich should be there at midday. I invited Borchardt to come to the hospital at about 11 a.m. with the intention of showing him round the surgical block before the operation, but Professor Borchardt asked to be allowed to come at 10.30 a.m. I did not object, of course, thinking that he wanted to have a closer look at the hospital.

Borchardt arrived dragging along an enormous suitcase full of all sorts of instruments, and this greatly surprised me and my assistants. All the instruments really required for the operation were a few artery and dissecting forceps, a probe, scissors and a knife—that's all; he brought mountains of them. I reassured him, explained that we had everything, that everything was ready, the novocaine solution was also prepared, gloves were available, and since there was an hour and a half left before Vladimir Il'yich's arrival offered to show him round the surgical block. But he was evidently very worried and said that he would prefer to start preparing for the operation. Then Borchardt began saying that I should operate and that he would assist me, to which I replied that the operation must be done by him and that I would gladly assist him. Borchardt repeated several times his offer to act as assistant. I don't know to this day why he was saying this, possibly out of courtesy. As to the operation itself, Vladimir Il'yich told me and Dr. Ochkin later, when we were dressing his wound: 'I thought that the whole job would have been simpler had I squeezed it—so, yes, and nicked the skin, the bullet would have popped out; it was all such a pantomime'. One had to chuckle and almost agree with him.

Vladimir Il'yich arrived punctually at 12 noon and with him Comrade Belenki (a bodyguard—L.C.) and someone else from the guard. N. A. Semashko came also. Of course, only Nikolai Aleksandrovich was admitted to the operating room, and he asked me 'And who is going to operate?' I replied: 'The German, of course, what else did he come for?' He agreed. The operation went perfectly smoothly. Vladimir Il'yich was not in the least put out and only winced slightly once during the operation. I was certain that Vladimir Il'yich would go home half an hour after the operation but Borchardt objected strenuously and insisted that the patient remain in the hospital for at least 24 hours. I had nothing against this, of course, in-patient care is always safer. But where would I put such

* The erratic pointing of the magnetic compass in the Kursk region of central Russia.

a patient as Vladimir Il'yich? The wards were full—but who were these patients? I knew what they suffered from but had no idea of what was in their minds. After talking this over with the chief doctor, V. I. Sokolov, we decided to put Vladimir Il'yich in ward 44 (of what is now known as the Botkin Hospital—L.C.); the ward was separate from the others for isolation purposes, and the one patient in there could easily be moved to a general ward. Vladimir Il'yich started to protest, not wanting to remain in hospital over trifles. We had to persuade him, explain that after cocaine there might be nausea and vomiting, that he might develop a headache, and that it would be more convenient for us to look after him in hospital. Vladimir Il'yich would not agree for a long time; what finally clinched the issue was, I think, my remark: 'I even prepared a ward for you, Vladimir Il'yich, on the women's side'. Vladimir Il'yich burst out laughing, said: 'Away with you!', and stayed.

The unexpected admission to hospital caused, of course, some trouble for the hospital staff, but more so for the guard and Nadezhda Konstantinovna and Mariya Il'yinichna, who telephoned and, later, arrived in person. Mariya Il'yinichna was worried that Vladimir Il'yich might not receive any food. I reassured her saying that we would look after all his needs, and give him both food and drink.

As for all patients, admission and record cards were made out for Vladimir Il'yich and filled in by the chief doctor, V. Sokolov. Vladimir Il'yich complied readily with all the hospital requirements, answered the questions and allowed himself to be examined. I shall quote only the last few lines of the case summary: 'As far as the nervous system is concerned, there is general irritability, occasional insomnia and headaches. Specialists have diagnosed neurasthenia caused by overwork.'

About 7 in the evening my young son cut his leg rather badly. I had to take him to the department, insert some stitches and dress the wound. When I called after this on Vladimir Il'yich I told him about the accident, and he enquired every day how the leg was doing, until the boy's full recovery. Such attention to others was one of the characteristics of Vladimir Il'yich. Vladimir Il'yich was feeling very well and when I asked him if he wanted anything replied, pointing to Comrade Belenky at the door, 'Tell him not to fuss so much and not to worry other patients.' At about 11 in the evening, when I called again, Vladimir Il'yich was already asleep."

1922

On May 26, 1922, when in Gorki, Lenin was suddenly seized with an attack of abdominal pain and vomiting. As he was also feverish, an infection was at first suspected, but his wife's physician, Dr. F. A. Get'ye, detected on examination loss of power in the right arm and

leg together with speech disturbance. Physicians were sent for: Professor V. N. Rozanov and Dr. L. G. Levin. They arrived together with the Minister, N. A. Semashko. The diagnosis of hemiplegia was confirmed and neurologists called in: at first Professor V. V. Kramer, and a day or two later Dr. A. M. Kozhevnikov. The last-named remained in constant attendance until 1st October. Professor Foerster arrived from Breslau in June, stayed intermittently in Moscow till September, and came again in December. The most severe phase of the disease lasted only three weeks and was followed by steady recovery, but in June and July he suffered from transient episodes of hemiplegia lasting from $\frac{1}{2}$ -2 hours.

In June he was visited again by Professor Klemperer who, on returning to Berlin, expressed himself optimistically. He reported seeing Lenin up and about the garden and feeling reasonably well, even though he could not work or read as much as before.

In October Lenin was allowed to resume work on condition that it would not exceed five hours a day and that two days a week he would rest completely. Lenin agreed but cheated mildly when he thought he could get away with it.

On 13th November he addressed a session of the fourth congress of the Third International. He spoke for an hour and twenty minutes in German and appeared quite well to people in the audience. Lenin himself knew, however, that after the stroke he was prone to forget words and had to resort to circumlocution, and he remarked to one of his doctors that he had had to do so several times during that particular speech. He felt worse again towards the end of November, but on the 20th was still able to address a meeting of the Moscow Soviet. This proved to be his last public appearance.

Early in December he went to Gorki intending to work there, but on the 12th returned to Moscow. By that time he must have realised that the sands were running out for him and began to put his public affairs in order.

On December 13 he suffered from two transient attacks of hemiplegia and wanted to embark for Gorki, but the roads were snowed up. Lasting paralysis set in on December 16, but on this occasion speech remained unaffected.

After a week he insisted on being allowed to dictate to his secretaries, threatening otherwise to discontinue all treatment. The doctors had to agree to a few minutes of dictation a day. Lenin had never learned to dictate before and found it very difficult to do so now. Yet, according to his secretaries, all the articles and letters he dictated retained his characteristic pungent style and clarity. One of these letters was the so-called "testament", in which he advised the party to find a way of removing Stalin from the leading position he then occupied. (On his instructions all letters were kept in sealed envelopes marked "To be opened only by V. I. Lenin or in the

event of his death by N. K. Krupskaya").)

The Last Year

The third and most serious attack struck Lenin on March 9th, again in Moscow. The clinical signs were much as on the previous occasions: right-side paralysis, aphasia and, this time, also initial loss of consciousness. Rozanov reports that on March 10th he was requested to visit Lenin and that on the following day Stalin had rung him and asked him to spend as much time as possible with Lenin. He saw Lenin on March 11th. Although still drowsy, Lenin recognised Rozanov, held his hand with his left one and stroked it for a while. Official bulletins about Lenin's health began to be issued on March 12th but were, apparently, soon discontinued. During March-April he twice developed respiratory and renal complications with pyrexia, both of which gave rise to considerable anxiety. In May he was moved by ambulance to Gorki. A number of new foreign and Russian specialists were called in: E. Henschen and his son from Sweden, O. Bumke, H. Nonne and A. Strümpell from Germany, and the Russian neurologist, V. M. Bekhterev. The last stages of the illness have been well described by Professor Osipov, who was in constant attendance.

Lenin understood perfectly when spoken to but could himself utter only a few monosyllables—"vot-vot" and "vedi-vedi", and he tried hard to vary the meaning of these words by inflexion of voice, facial expression and gestures. If people failed to understand him he could be thrown into a fit of rage. He was word blind and could read nothing. At first all books and newspapers were kept from him, but he came across one by accident in Gorki and thereafter insisted on having newspapers read to him daily. If Krupskaya attempted to omit something in the part he wanted read, in order not to worry him unduly, he would often notice it and protest. His paralysis was slowly improving. He started walking with assistance and used a wheelchair in the park. Eventually he was able to get up and down the stairs alone, leaning on the banister. He was given warm baths for his paralysed arm, and general physiotherapy. Orthopaedic boots were made to support his right ankle and he was very happy with them.

Speech training was also begun. It was conducted initially by Dr. S. M. Dobrogayev but had to be discontinued when Lenin's condition deteriorated slightly. When he was ready to resume he was already intolerant of doctors (see below) and all the later training was done by his wife. It was conducted with Lenin's usual punctuality, morning and afternoon. He also began learning to write with the left hand and went on with this till three days before his death. No real progress was made, however, with the writing.

Convulsive attacks set in in the course of the last illness but the precise time of onset is not stated. According to Osipov, they consisted of loss of consciousness lasting 15-20 seconds followed by twitching. These attacks were at first light but became more prolonged and severe later on.

A distinct change also took place in the mood and character of the patient. Some deterioration of intellect is also apparent in the numerous accounts of his behaviour at the time. He was often depressed and tearful, irritable and given to outbursts of anger. After June he refused to have any doctors or nurses around him, and they had to keep out of sight in the house. Foerster, who was invariably kind to him, was tolerated longer than the others, but he too was also rejected towards autumn. Lenin stopped taking the prescribed medicines. Osipov mentions that he had been having quinine and iodides for some considerable time when he suddenly refused to have any more of them. Another irrational or, at any rate, unexplained act was his refusal one day when out in the wheelchair in the garden to return to his own room. He insisted instead on being taken to a small, hot, uncomfortable and unsuitable room in the wing of the house, and this became his home thereafter. Perhaps even more obscure was his decision not to see any of his former colleagues in the party and government, thus dissociating himself, as it were, completely from public life. He did, however, receive a few delegations of workers and peasants (the number of such delegations is not stated). According to the delegates Lenin was friendly, listened to what they had to say, and smiled and gestured to them in return.

From September onward he was driven daily to the woods remaining in the open air 2-3 hours each day. Occasionally he would go with friends picking mushrooms in the woods and was delighted to spot some the others had missed. He was also interested in the cinema, and so film shows were arranged for him.

A curious incident occurred on October 18th. All morning and over dinner Lenin had been restless. Then, when out in the car with his wife, sister and Professor Osipov, he suddenly gestured to the driver to proceed to Moscow. Mariya Il'yinichna tried to stop him: "Volodya, they won't let you in. You don't have a pass for the Kremlin". Once or twice they made signs to the driver to turn round. But Lenin would have none of this. He seemed happy and waved his cap when they came in sight of the Moscow streets. In the Kremlin he went up to his flat, looked round, picked up a few books and left again. On the way back they drove past the Agricultural Exhibition and then returned to Gorki.

When winter came he would set out in a sleigh with hunters. He attended a Christmas tree arranged for the children in Gorki but did not stay long, not wanting to spoil the children's fun.

He seems to have held his own in January. Krupskaya recounts that on the 19th she read him a short story by Jack London about a starving and freezing man trying to reach his destination and safety and a wolf who followed doggedly waiting for a chance to attack him. Lenin liked the story. Next day she tried another one about a manager of a store who remained loyal to the proprietor in spite of all temptation and much provocation. This one Lenin dismissed with a rueful wave of the hand.

An ophthalmologist, Professor M. I. Averbakh, called in the afternoon of January 20th to examine Lenin's eyes because Lenin had, apparently, complained the previous day of his vision. Averbakh found nothing abnormal. As he was leaving the doctors in a neighbouring room crowded around him to find out how Lenin was. At that very moment Lenin himself entered the room. He was evidently worried that the weather was not safe enough for Averbakh to venture back to Moscow and wanted him to stay overnight. Averbakh had to return, however.

On the 21st January Lenin felt somewhat weaker, more apathetic than previously and had no appetite, but his general condition caused no special concern. At about 6 p.m. he suddenly lost consciousness, had a prolonged tonic fit with cyanosis and died from respiratory paralysis at 6.50 p.m. Death was certified by O. Foerster, V. P. Osipov and P. Yelistratov.

Post-Mortem

Next day, as the dazed, grief-stricken people of the vast and at that time bitterly cold country were assembling in small groups or large public meetings to lament the loss of their leader, the last medical examination—a post-mortem—was being performed in Gorki by Professor A. I. Abrikosov in the presence of Professors Otfrid Foerster, V. Osipov, V. Bunak, A. Deshin, and Drs. B. Veisbrod, V. Obukh, P. Yelistratov, V. N. Rozanov, and the Minister of Health—N. A. Semashko. The autopsy began at 11.40 a.m. and ended at 2.50 p.m. The relevant parts of the protocol were as follows :—

Externally, two old scars of bullet wounds were present over the left arm, and another healed scar over the anterior end of the right clavicle, where one of the bullets had been extracted. The second bullet was deformed and found deep to the posterior margin of the left deltoid muscle.

The brain weighed 1,340 g. The surface of the anterior part of the left cerebral hemisphere was depressed compared with that of the opposite side. The left hemisphere was also collapsed in the region of the precentral gyrus, the parietal and occipital lobes, over the paracentral region and the temporal gyri. In the right hemisphere two adjoining areas of collapsed tissue were present at the junction

of the occipital and parietal lobes. Over these collapsed parts the soft meninges were opaque and whitish-yellow in colour. Other areas of the meningeal fibrosis were also present over the non-collapsed parts of the brain.

The main arteries at the base of the brain showed marked arteriosclerotic change. Both vertebral and the basilar arteries were thickened and rigid. Their lumina were considerably narrowed, presenting in some areas as mere narrow slits. Similar changes were present in their branches (posterior cerebral arteries). The internal carotid and anterior cerebral arteries were also hardened and showed irregularly thickened walls and, in places, in greatly constricted lumina. The left internal carotid artery in its intracranial part showed no lumen whatever; its cut surface appeared as a solid whitish cord. The left middle cerebral artery was very thick and hard but displayed a slit-like lumen. When the brain was cut both lateral ventricles were seen to be dilated, especially the left one. Under the collapsed areas on the surface of the brain were foci of yellowish softening which had formed numerous cavities containing turbid fluid. The softenings had involved both white and grey matter. Fresh haemorrhage was present over the quadrigeminal plate of the midbrain.

A few old pleural adhesions were present over both lungs. The aortic valves were somewhat thickened at their base. The mitral valves were thickened at their contact margins. Atheromatous plaques were present in the ascending aorta. The coronary arteries were rigid and their lumina narrowed. The wall of the left ventricle of the heart was somewhat thickened, measuring $1\frac{3}{4}$ cm. Atheromatous plaques, some of them calcified, were present in the descending aorta and in the larger abdominal arteries.

A healed scar was present near the apex of the left upper lobe of the lung. The left humerus showed a healed fracture.

The report concludes with the statement that the underlying disease process had been caused by premature degeneration of the arteries ("Abnützungssklerose", i.e. wear and tear sclerosis). As a result of the narrowing of the cerebral arteries and consequent interference with the nutrition of the brain, parts of the brain had softened. This accounts for all the symptoms of the disease, such as paralysis and dysphasia.

The ultimate causes of death were given as (1) an increase in the interference with the blood supply of the brain, and (2) haemorrhage over the corpora quadrigemina.

In the next few days and weeks many articles appeared in the main newspapers, including some by Lenin's doctors, explaining in simple but accurate language the nature of his illness. A medical summary of the illness was also published. The following points were stressed :—

1. There was no cause for Lenin's symptoms and illness other than that specified in the reports.
2. Everything possible was done for Lenin. The best Russian and foreign specialists had been called in.
3. The disease was aggravated by largely self-imposed overwork, particularly in the last years of his life.
4. The autopsy had shown that most of the very severe damage sustained by the brain must have been present some time before death, yet the patient was thought to have retained much of his former mental power. It is reported that Foerster was the first to express admiration at the powerful intellect which must have been Lenin's if what was left after the ravages of the disease was still so impressive.

Lenin's Brain: The Embalming

On Lenin's death a commission was set up to deal with all commemorative matters. In the course of the next few weeks and months a decision emerged to embalm the body and to inter it in a specially built mausoleum in Red Square. Although it is widely held that this decision was taken against the wishes of the widow, and it certainly seems out of keeping with Lenin's own character, the objection, if there was one, is not recorded in any published material.

The account of the commemoration committee's work shows, moreover, that the decision to preserve the body for permanent viewing was not made outright : it grew on them. Such a possibility was at first not even contemplated. It was known at once that the body would have to lie in state for a few days, and for this purpose Professor Abrikosov used the usual solution of formalin, glycerine, potassium iodide, alcohol and zinc chloride. On 23rd January Lenin's body was transferred from Gorki to the Trade Union Hall in Moscow and a constant stream of people began to file past it. At the same time numerous requests were arriving from outlying places to delay interment until the arrival of their representatives. On 27th January the body was transferred to a glass-covered tomb in the Red Square and in the course of the next six weeks some 100,000 mourners filed past it. It then became obvious that the urge to see the body would continue indefinitely. But the initial embalming was inadequate : signs of deterioration were setting in : areas of autolysis, pigmentation and desiccation of the skin. The committee then approached specialists and it was decided to submit the body to proper embalming, this work being entrusted to the anatomy professor of Kharkov University, V. P. Vorob'yev, and his assistants. The viewing of the body was stopped and a thorough scrutiny made. This was followed by very elaborate restoration work and embalming, the work proceeding day and night for four months. Bit by bit, every portion of the body including bones was at first hydrated if

necessary, depigmented with a solution of acids, peroxides and aldehydes, and finally embalmed. On 26th July the body was inspected by the committee who decided that the embalming had been successful and that with proper care the body could be preserved for decades in a glass-enclosed sarcophagus. This would meet the wishes of countless people. The mausoleum was reopened on 1st August, 1924.

It was also resolved, possibly on Professor Foerster's advice, to submit Lenin's brain to full morphological study. The person entrusted with this project was the German neuropathologist, Professor Oskar Vogt. It was hoped that this study would throw light on the structural basis of Lenin's genius. Vogt's method was to embed the brain in paraffin, to cut it in uninterrupted serial sections 20 microns thick, and to examine after staining each of the sections. A brain prepared in this way would yield an enormous number of sections—perhaps 30,000. Since there were neither trained staff nor the necessary laboratory facilities for this purpose in Moscow, Vogt undertook to train at his institute in Berlin some young Russian workers. The ones he mentioned later in this connection were Sarkisov, Filimonov, Sapir and Popov, though perhaps not all of these were trained in Berlin. (Professor Sarkisov later became well known in England as the representative of the Soviet Red Cross during the war.) At the same time it was decided to build a special research institute in Moscow where the stained sections of Lenin's brain would be subsequently examined.

Rather surprisingly, there appear to be no Soviet reports on this projected study of Lenin's brain. Vogt spoke about it in a lecture delivered on 10th November, 1929 at the newly established institute, called at that time the Pantheon of Brain Research, which became later the Moscow Brain Institute. The rather strange lecture began with an attack on another famous anatomist, von Economo, who had had the temerity not to subscribe fully to Vogt's views on methods of anatomical brain study. Vogt then went on to explain that in the course of 1925, 1926 and 1927 Lenin's brain had been fully processed histologically. In the second half of 1927 a preliminary examination of the sections was made by Vogt himself. He found that the pyramidal cells in layer III of many cerebral areas were unduly numerous and large. (The cerebral cortex of man is formed, depending on the area examined, of 5-7 layers of nerve cells; layer III consists mainly of so-called pyramidal cells). Moreover, layer III was relatively deeper and layer IV shallower than in other people. Since the cells of layer III were at that time regarded by Vogt (and many others) as serving as the basis for mental "association", Vogt's findings were in conformity with what he regarded as Lenin's "association athleticism".

The professor went on to outline future plans. It was still neces-

sary, of course, to study in detail some 200 cortical and subcortical areas of Lenin's brain. The special morphological features of the brain would then have to be correlated with Lenin's extraordinary mental qualities. An attempt would also have to be made to establish the material substrate for "the racial characteristics of Lenin's personality". For this purpose it was clearly necessary to define many hitherto unestablished normal variations of structure and Vogt mentioned some of the work undertaken with that end in view. They had begun accumulating so-called "elite" brains, i.e. of intellectually brilliant individuals, and had already 13 such specimens, including that of Rossolimo, one of the neurologists who examined Lenin. These brains were also cut in serial sections. Then, since it was in his view essential to establish "racial" characteristics, they were proceeding to examine 16 brains of Russians and 23 of persons of other races. In addition, they were studying the brains of 22 children, 4 monkeys and 49 other animals.

Since they had to be very certain of Lenin's mental qualities, a special questionnaire on his personality had been prepared for submission to all who knew him.

Nothing further appears to have been published about all this. The project was probably quietly (and mercifully) dropped. (After the outbreak of the war Professor Vogt, who was then 69, was pressed into the German Army. He was hated by the Nazis for his liberal views, his marriage to a Frenchwoman—another distinguished neuropathologist, Cécile Vogt—and the respect which he showed for Russia and Lenin. The Schwarze Korps had written about the Vogts in 1936, with the customary Nazi wit and subtlety, that they were white Jews who under the cloak of science wanted to persuade the world of Lenin's intelligence whereas Lenin's brain was all Swiss cheese. The old gentleman was made to go through his drill to the taunts and jeers of the soldiery around him. He outlived the Third Reich, however, and died in 1959 at the age of 89).

A Few Afterthoughts

However unique the man in his prime, however high the flight of his intellect, in his fall he is as earthbound as all mortal men. There are no exceptions. And thus the story of Lenin's illness adds nothing to our understanding of his greatness, nor does recognition of his genius throw light on any aspect of his disease, much as many biographers would have it otherwise: Having once again repeated: 'Oh, what a great mind is here o'erthrown!' one has really said all.

Of course, for reasons already mentioned and many others, his illness is of vast historical interest. It was wise of the government to publish all data; his death might otherwise have been turned into a political weapon by one of the belligerent factions against another. Trotsky and Bukharin are accused in the last issue of the *Bolshaya*

Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya (Large Soviet Encyclopaedia) of involvement in Kaplan's 1918 plot to assassinate Lenin, but neither they nor, for that matter, Stalin, can possibly be blamed for Lenin's illness and death.

The fullest clinical and pathological investigations may on occasion leave the diagnosis in doubt. There was no room for such doubt in Lenin's case. The extensive ischaemic softenings of the brain caused by temporary arrest of the blood flow in the arteriosclerotic arteries explain all the symptoms of the disease: the paralysis, loss of speech and fits. The diagnosis now, half a century later, would have been the same. Nor has the treatment altered significantly even though minor improvements have been introduced. Likewise, we are not much further ahead in understanding the causes of this disease. The slight hypertrophy of the left ventricle of Lenin's heart suggests that he suffered from hypertension, although no readings of his blood pressure appear to have been published. Arteriosclerosis with or without associated hypertension is caused, as we understand it today, by a combination of hereditary, occupational and dietetic factors, and these probably play their part in determining the development of Lenin's illness.

It might have been thought that contraction of scar tissues around the bullet track on the left side of the neck so close to one of the main arteries carrying blood to the left cerebral hemisphere could have kinked the vessel and restricted further the already limited blood flow, but this is unlikely since the opposite hemisphere, supplied by other arteries, was also affected, albeit to a slighter extent. In the circumstances one would have expected the pathologist, Professor Abrikosov, to examine and describe the arteries in the neck. This apparently was not done, possibly because the neck and the arteries in it were needed intact for embalming.

It seems worth while to clear up at this point a minor linguistic ambiguity which has caused some confusion in the past. The Russians refer to Lenin's illness as "skleroz mozga" or cerebral sclerosis, a term not usually employed in English for arteriosclerotic brain damage. The English might say: "We are as old as our arteries"; the Russian, when he forgets something important, could point sadly to his own head and mutter: "Skleroz . . ."

As mentioned, the doctors at autopsy have also used the German term "Abnützungssklerose" or "wear and tear sclerosis" to describe the condition of Lenin's arteries. This term also is not used in this country, and the whole concept of arterial disease being the result of mental strain or overwork is quite unproven.

Knowing all that has happened in later years, it is of interest that almost all the foreign specialists, headed by Otfried Foerster, invited to attend Lenin were German. This is, however, understandable in view of the high esteem in which German medicine was held at the

time, particularly in Russia. It was not unusual for Russian specialists to receive part of their training in Germany and to publish their work in German journals. Moreover, Lenin was, as explained in her memoirs by his sister, Mariya, of partly German origin and spoke the language fluently.

The anatomical study initiated by Vogt, however reasonable it may have seemed at the time, appears naive, not to say absurd, now. Nobody has ever shown that the size of the nerve cells in the cerebral cortex is in any way correlated with intelligence. In fact, some abnormally large cells may sometimes be seen in the vicinity of damaged and thus functionally impaired areas of the brain. Nor is there any evidence to connect layer III of the human cortex with "association". Equally fantastic seem Vogt's speculations on the "racial" peculiarities of intelligence. The disposition and numbers of nerve cells in the human brain are so immensely complex and vary so much from area to area and person to person that it is quite unrealistic to expect to discover by available methods differences accounting for modalities of intelligence. However, the situation may change: introduction of computer scanning and analysis may, for example, render some of Vogt's ideas more plausible. Moreover, the project was not all loss. The Moscow Brain Institute, a child of the project, stands for many years now as one of the leading neurological research centres in the world. It may not have advanced much the study of Lenin's brain, but it has gathered many other solid achievements to its credit.

Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya

Beatrice King

First Acquaintance

It was in 1936 that I met Nadezhda Konstantinovna, as everybody called her then, and still calls her. It expressed the assurance of men, women and children that she was their friend.

On the first introduction there was nothing remarkable about Nadezhda Konstantinovna. Ordinary in appearance, very ordinary in her simple dark dress, with an ordinary simple approach. "What language shall we speak in?" "Russian", said my friend from VOKS, the forerunner of the USSR Friendship Societies. At once, her eyes

mirrored the smile of pleasure. We talked for two hours; more correctly, I put questions, and Nadezhda Konstantinovna talked, and as she talked one became aware of the deep humanity that pervaded her whole being. It was not an amorphous humanity of generalised emotion that made no demands on man and led nowhere. She had great respect for man and great faith in him. Like Gorki, she held the word "man" to be wonderfully sounding. And because of this she demanded much from people. But her demands took into account social conditions and history.

Respect for Tradition

I remember we were discussing the problem of education for some of the primitive Asian nationalities. She insisted that the young of these people must not be expected instantaneously to accept the European order of school and classroom. These people had been accustomed for generations to live in large family groups of all ages. When the young members came to school they insisted on sitting in their family group. They must be allowed to do so until they attained a confidence and security which made the adoption of new customs a natural process. We should be careful not to destroy traditions that gave emotional security to family relationships. We must allow for the natural development of new traditions.

Childhood

It was on a raw, grey day in Petersburg on February 14/26 (according to Gregorian or Roman calendar) in 1869, that a daughter was born to Konstantin Ignatyevich and Elizaveta Vasilyevna Krupsky. The parents were well educated, belonged to the minor nobility, and were poor. Both the parents belonged to those circles of the intelligentsia that were not only shocked and horrified at the appalling conditions of life for both workers and peasants, but argued and discussed the possibilities for change. In the Krupsky's home revolutionaries of various kinds met and talked, and Nadya was allowed to listen. Her father's efforts to lighten the burden of the people among whom he worked as a tsarist official, particularly in Poland, led to police surveillance over many years, to denunciation by informers, and finally to dismissal as a result of prosecutions. Twenty-five accusations were brought against her father, of which some were "he does not light illuminations on the Tsar's Day, does not go to church, speaks Polish, dances the mazurka."

Her parents did not keep Nadya away from the revolutionary talk. She was encouraged to play with the children of servants and workers in the courtyard.

An incident at the age of five made a lifelong impression on her. Nadezhda and her mother were returning by sleigh on a wintry night from a visit to the country. Suddenly they were attacked by

peasants who believed they were rich landowners. They might well have been killed. The driver dreadfully beaten up was about to be pushed under the ice, when the peasants realised that these were not rich landowners, and let them go.

At home Nadezhda heard her father say, on learning of what could have been a tragedy: "You cannot really blame the peasants. It is the only form of redress they have."

Community activity

The desire to help in some way the poor, the exploited, the down-trodden about whom she used to hear in her parents' house, became implanted in her at an early age and was encouraged by her parents, who did their best to educate her to think and understand. With all this she was a normal healthy child, played with dolls, did her duties about the house and learned her three R's from her mother who produced a somewhat special, illustrated reader entitled "A Child's Day—a gift to children", which in rhymes and jingles detailed all the activities of a satisfactorily brought-up child, learning to tidy, wash, cook, etc, etc, all in a happy mood. The original is preserved in the Saltykov-Shchedrin State library in Leningrad.

Nadya was ten when she decided with two friends to make a zoo for the neighbouring children. Material would cost money and they had little, if any. So the three went from house to house, collecting pill-boxes which they then sold back to the chemists. Then they ransacked shops and libraries for books with pictures of wild animals. The result of their efforts with cardboard, scissors, paste and paint brush was a zoo which gave much pleasure to the local small children, a very early effort at creating a "community" which Krupskaya later considered so essential for education.

School

The thorough mastering of the three R's as tools, made Nadya very eager for school. The parents satisfied her wish by sending her to the Marinsky School. So far an explanation of this choice of school has not been discovered for it was a very old-fashioned girls' gymnasium, with a lower educational standard, where children sat in a class of fifty, with very poor teaching, with no friendliness among the children. For Nadya the result was bad marks, for her attention was always wandering off from the dreary routine lessons to what were for her important matters.

In the second semester Nadya fell ill. Through her father's work connections Nadya was sent to a country village in Pskov guberniya to recuperate.

Timofeika

Going out for a walk in the garden of the estate the day after her

arrival Nadya met an attractive eighteen-year-old girl, the local village teacher. This was the now well-known Alexandra Timofeyevna Yavorskaya—the ‘Timofeika’ who so helped Nadya to find herself. She began more and more regularly to visit the village school, to solve arithmetic problems with the five older boys, and to read aloud to each other. She was very happy indeed there. Timofeika helped Nadya to understand the life of the peasants, the hardships and the insults which they had to bear from their landowners. An unforgettable impression was made on Nadya by a visit to the landowner’s great house where she compared the luxurious conditions provided for the house dogs with the poverty and indignity that was the lot of the peasants who provided the wealth.

A new school

On returning to Petersburg Nadya, now twelve, was fortunate to enter the Obolensky gymnasium, a girls’ school, if anything on a *higher academic level than the boys’ gymnasium, where the finest educationalists of the time became teachers.* It may surprise some of us in Britain to learn that this school was the result of the activity of Princess Obolenskaya and other women who, in the 1860’s campaigned not just for equally good, but for better gymnasia for girls, that would enable them to go on to higher education. Nadezhda was very happy here, where forbidden opinions were voiced and subjects treated with a progressive approach and in depth. When Nadezhda was 14 her father died which left them in very straitened circumstances.

Starting work

She had by this time reached a wide general development. She had made good friends with her schoolmates, established links with people who accepted the need for revolution, and had given proof of her teaching talent. Nadya began to work as a coach and letter writer for illiterates. The work was hard and made unpleasant by the condescending attitude of the parents whose children she taught.

Her desire to teach did not diminish. She was convinced that as a teacher and educationist she would best help the people. In spite of brilliant results at the gymnasium Nadezhda could not find a regular post. She went to work as a coach at a private school of 20 pupils. In addition she began to teach in a trade school where girls learnt sewing. Eager to improve her educational practice and experience she succeeded in getting permission to visit some city primary schools and those of the polytechnical society. Her dissatisfaction persisted. She was not looking for peaceful educational work, “for a comfortable rest” but for a way to fight the lies and the evil that reigned in official Russia.

Concern with revolution

Since the age of twelve Nadezhda was concerned about the revolutionary movement, and this concern grew stronger with every year. But she could find no directions as to the road that would lead towards the desired goal, the emancipation of the Russian people. She had thought that the assassination of Alexander II would bring the change she was dreaming about. In fact, conditions became worse. No, she decided, terror was not the way. Nor, though she had the warmest feeling for Tolstoy could she believe that his message of the perfection of the individual personality through physical work would change society.

Still searching, she then thought she might find the solution to the problem worrying her in the Higher Courses for Women, resumed after an official shut-down. She entered the Mathematical Department in the Bestuzhev Course. Talking to her fellow-students from the provinces she met nothing to enlighten her. She enjoyed study, derived great pleasure from Imshchensky's lectures on analytical geometry, attended lectures of other Faculties, in history and in psychology. And as before she asked herself: "What is the solution? Can I help the people by the study of mathematics?" The many people to whom she put the question "How will mathematics help me?" regarded her uncomprehendingly. Through one of her friends Nadezhda attended a gathering of forty young people. They formed groups and in the beginning of 1890 Nadezhda joined the so-called "Ethics Group" where she was given a book—Lavronov's "Historical Letters". It was the first book that dealt with problems that were worrying her, and threw light on aspects hitherto in darkness. Here, for the first time, she heard the word "international" and the names Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. In the spring she borrowed volume I of *Das Kapital* and then was given other books that fed her hungry mind. She relates that she found the first two chapters of *Das Kapital* very difficult at the first reading. Marxism opened up new prospects for her. She now felt that it was impossible for her to attend study courses, earn her living and study Marx. Unhesitatingly she gave up the Courses, reduced her paid work and concentrated on the study of Marx.

In the autumn, on the return of the students to Petersburg, the youth meetings were resumed. She learnt German in order to read Engels *Anti-Duhring* since at that time there was no Russian translation.

The serious study of these works convinced her that life in Russia could only be changed by a workers' revolutionary movement and that "to be useful one must devote oneself totally to the cause of the workers."

Adult education

This conviction led her to change her path, to link up with

workers, and in 1891 she began teaching in the Sunday Evening School in the Schlüsselburg Road in Petersburg. Here the pupils were workers from the city, of all ages, all conditions, of varying beliefs, some totally illiterate. They all became her friends and taught her much about the appalling conditions of the workers in Tsarist Russia. She was immediately informed, through a look, a word or a gesture, when a new spy joined a class.

Despite the ubiquitous presence of informers, with the rightly chosen phrase, the special intonation, one could talk about anything in class provided the frightening words such as "Tsar" or "strike" were never mentioned. But officially everything imaginable was forbidden. Once a class was closed because an inspector found decimals being taught there, whereas officially only the four rules of arithmetic were to be taught. The politically conscious workers among the pupils, once they realised Krupskaya's position, accepted her as a friend, and helped her to gain detailed personal knowledge of the workers' conditions. Simply dressed, with a kerchief over her head, looking like a factory worker, they would take her over the workers' barracks where they lived in incredible conditions. The information she collected was of great use to Lenin later on. This period of teaching the workers was one of the happiest in her life. She was now sure of her path, sure that the workers, given the understanding and the knowledge, would bring about the change which must come in Russia.

Lenin arrives

In 1893 Lenin came to Petersburg and they met at one of the discussion groups which Krupskaya was now attending regularly. When he organised the *Union for the Emancipation of the Working Class* it was natural for Krupskaya to join. They were attracted to each other; she to him by the lucidity and directness of his mind, by his burning desire to help the people, he to her by her understanding of the essentials of a situation, by her warm personality.

After a meeting he would return with her to her flat where the discussion would continue and the talk was of the school, of the mood of the workers and how to organise them. She enabled Lenin to establish direct links with the workers.

It was in 1895 that Krupskaya took part in a preliminary meeting for the preparation of the 1st Congress of the Social Democratic organisation. After Lenin's arrest and exile to Siberia in that same year, she kept him informed by correspondence of the political situation and sent him books.

Arrest and Exile

In 1896 Krupskaya was herself arrested and sentenced to three years exile. She used the seven months in the remand home to

agitate successfully for permission to be sent to Siberia, where she joined Lenin in Shushenskoye village, where they married. Her mother joined her daughter in exile and was a great support in their daily life. Writing of this period Krupskaya said : "Exile was not so bad. It was a time of great study." She wrote her first books there, *The Woman Worker*, the result of her investigations during her teaching period. It was published in Geneva in 1901 and illegally reprinted in Russia several times. She helped Lenin with the translation of the Webbs' work on British Trade Unionism.

Close co-operation

This period was the beginning of the close co-operation of Lenin and Krupskaya in the preparation for the Russian revolution of 1917. Side by side they enriched the other.

Lenin's exile ended; they both went to Ufa where Krupskaya spent the remaining months of her exile, while Lenin went to Petersburg, and then because the situation was becoming very dangerous for him, he left for Europe.

While at Ufa, Krupskaya carried on what became her lifelong practice till 1917 : establishing contact with workers, gathering information for Lenin, for the illegal papers in Russia and, when abroad, maintaining the lines of communication between revolutionaries in Russia and the exiles in Europe.

At every conference, no matter where it was held, she not only took part in the preparatory work but she would take minutes, edit resolutions, and prepare the reports. Wherever they were, they lived simply, and while they both had an appreciation of beauty, particularly of the countryside, neither of them paid much attention to external conveniences and appearance. Those interested in the details of Krupskaya's life abroad will find it in her *Memories of Lenin*.

October Revolution

When the October Revolution was becoming a reality, Krupskaya devoted herself to her first love, education. She had always acknowledged that education was the foundation of a country's life. Her unpaid teaching at the Secondary Evening School in Petersburg acted as a catalyst to her natural love of the profession.

During her stay abroad she devoted much time to the study of education beginning with the Utopians. She knew of the American experiment with the Children's Republic, knew the work of Pestalozzi and Froebel and Kirschenstein and was critical of them, while not denying their partial values. Visiting schools in Geneva she was horrified at the atmosphere of the barrack room.

Education principles

She was a great advocate of freedom with discipline, attained

through learning and working in a group, a collective. Only in such conditions could the individuality of a child, which was a precious thing, develop and be enriched. She considered the first task of a teacher was to create such a community from the individuals of a class. This necessitated not only common learning, but a common aim and purpose expressed through service. She believed in self-government to a reasonable degree, that was within the stage of maturity and experience of the children. It seemed wrong to her to expect children to take adult decisions and come to adult judgements on their experience as children. It was almost a shirking of duty by adults.

Krupskaya had something wise and human to say on every aspect of education. She sent articles on different subjects to Russian legal and illegal papers which published them. In one of these she showed it was as valuable for boys as for girls to learn domestic science, to do their share in the home. She gave clear guides on the direction to be taken by the new schools. Her greatest contribution here was on polytechnisation, a fundamental principle of Marxist education.

Polytechnisation

While in exile Lenin had asked Krupskaya to prepare some notes on education generally and on polytechnisation in particular. They then discussed this. The result, which embodied Lenin's suggestions, was one of the many valuable articles she wrote.

On their return to Russia she devoted her energy to planning education for a socialist state. Always practical she began with a campaign for literacy and travelled the country with Kalinin on this campaign. She had previously written a number of articles published in *Pravda* on education, particularly for the All Russian Conference of Teachers. Speaking of the great activity at that time Lunarcharsky said: "Those were days, colossal in their creative sweep, possible only thanks to the preparatory work, to the clear educational direction and thought of the inspirer at Narkompros (People's Commissariat for Education). N. K. Krupskaya."

In 1920, Glavpolitprosvet* was set up, with Krupskaya at its head. She was already a member of the Collegium of the Commissariat for Education. In 1922 she initiated a serious discussion about introducing polytechnical education in the schools—a great pioneering step. It was not polytechnical *training* as such, not handwork, not preparation for a particular trade. It embraced not only work with hands, but also understanding of the whole context and process. For example, it meant not only woodwork, but a knowledge of woods, their history, geography and economics, their present role, and in the future, the organisation of the timber industry, its role

* Glavpolitprosvet. Chief Political Education Organisation.

then and the part it would play in a developing socialist society. All this applied to any practical work in the classroom, in the science laboratory and in the workshop. This led to a linking up of schools with production units, factories, farms, etc. There was a great deal of confusion and absurdity in the early years through ignorance.

By 1932 when I visited schools, it appeared to be functioning very successfully. But there must have been many educationists inside and outside schools for whom the ethics and educational philosophy of polytechnical training had no message. In 1937 it was quietly and not very officially dropped, and many of the excellently equipped workshops were closed. In 1938 I found only schools in remote rural areas retained some aspect of polytechnical training. This must have been a cause of deep regret to Krupskaya.

Now she would be very happy to find it back on a much higher level, scientifically and psychologically and sociologically based. She would be glad to know that her insistence on the great value of work for the community as an educational principle is now universally accepted. Her preoccupation with polytechnical training did not exclude her interest in children's leisure and the Pioneer movement, in the family to which she attached great importance and which led to the need for education of parents.

A Correspondent

Writing for parents on social education she says : "From the very earliest years the child should be placed in a situation where he lives, plays, works, shares his joy and his sorrow with other children. This social life should be the fullest, the happiest and the brightest. A child's social experience should be associated with pleasurable emotions." But she was against over-excitement. "Calm is as necessary for the normal emotional development of a child as for its mental development."

One could quote Krupskaya's wisdom on every problem of upbringing and education.

While Deputy Minister of Education with all that this involved she continued writing on educational, family and upbringing problems, as they arose. She had a vast correspondence, sometimes as many as 500 letters a day, all of which were answered in due course. Everybody wrote to her; orphan children who could not get a place in a school, pioneers and pioneer leaders, teachers in difficulties in their class, parents in difficulties in the home. It became almost a slogan : "In difficulty, write to Nadezhda Konstantinovna. She is our friend."

Almost to her last days she would get up often as early as 5 a.m., and work all day.

When she died in 1939 the whole country mourned her. She will live through her work, for, whatever modern methods and equip-

ment may be introduced into education, the social philosophy, the psychology, the ethics which pervade her work will remain valid.

Kitezh at the Bolshoi

M. Lavery

The time-honoured tradition whereby the Bolshoi Theatre used to open its season each September with Glinka's *Ivan Susanin* has undergone some modification in recent years. In 1960, this honour was accorded to the new production of Prokofiev's *War and Peace*. The year 1969 marked the 125th anniversary of the birth of the great Russian composer N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov, and the theatre most appropriately chose to open its 194th season on 4th September with its very impressive production of this composer's opera *Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh*.

With the exception of *The Golden Cockerel*, *Kitezh* is the last in the long line of Rimsky's major operas to have been remounted by the Bolshoi in recent years. The monumental revival of *Sadko* (1949) was followed by new productions of *The Maid of Pskov* (at the former *Filial*, or Branch Theatre, of the Bolshoi, in 1953), *The Snow Maiden* (1954), *The Tsar's Bride* (at the *Filial* in 1955), and *The Tale of Tsar Saltan* (1959).¹

It goes without saying that all of the above mentioned works enjoy great prestige among Bolshoi audiences. To cite just two examples, by 24th September, 1967, *The Tsar's Bride* had been performed at the Bolshoi 557 times since its first showing there in 1916—including 22 times in the present (1966) production; by the same date, *Saltan* had been performed at the Bolshoi 497 times since 1913, including 93 performances in the present (1959) production. It is plain that, so far as the Bolshoi is concerned, these works are more than capable of holding their own, even in the company of such world famous masterpieces as Moussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* (413 performances at the Bolshoi between 1888 and 2nd January, 1969, including 181 in the present (1948) production) and Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker*, which had been performed 255 times at the Bolshoi between 1919 and 5th January, 1969, including 39 performances in the present (1966) production.

¹ Yet another revival of *The Tsar's Bride* took place in the Bolshoi itself in April, 1966, just after the premiere of *Kitezh*. A new production of *The Maid of Pskov* is scheduled to be shown at the end of 1970. The figures given below for *Tsar Saltan* include performances on the stage of the Kremlin Palace of Congresses, to which the production has recently been transferred.

With *Kitezh* it is a somewhat different story. Although its Bolshoi premiere took place in 1908, eleven years earlier than that of *The Nutcracker*, prior to the present production the opera had only been performed 65 times on that theatre's stage. Moreover, apart from the Bolshoi itself, which staged revivals of *Kitezh* in 1926 and 1935, the opera has been staged elsewhere in the Soviet Union only in Riga (1949) and Leningrad (the Kirov Theatre's present production dates from 1958).

The return of *Kitezh* to the stage of the Bolshoi was eagerly awaited for many years, but it was not until early 1966 that the new production was finally mounted. There can be no doubt that the theatre's repertoire has been enormously enriched by the inclusion of this production. There can be no doubt, either, of the tremendous esteem in which the production is held by Moscow audiences. By 27th November, 1969, it had been performed 45 times, bringing the Bolshoi total for *Kitezh* to 110. Outside the Soviet Union, it attracted very favourable comment when it was shown in Montreal during Expo '67. It has also been shown during a Bolshoi season in Warsaw.

The subject of the opera relates to a legendary event held to have taken place in the lands beyond the Volga during the invasion of Russia by Batu Khan in the thirteenth century. The Tartars seized the town of Smaller Kitezh, putting all its male inhabitants to the sword, with the exception of a certain Grishka Kutierma, who, fearful of torture, agreed to guide them to Great Kitezh. However, the city of Kitezh did not fall to the Tartars, but was saved from them by being rendered invisible. The source material drawn on by Rimsky and his librettist V. I. Bielsky did not feature a heroine, and certain additions were made by them in this respect on the basis of the sixteenth century tale of Fevronia of Murom.

A distinctive feature of the present production is the use of a "second curtain" to accompany the short musical introduction. In this connection, many Moscow theatregoers will undoubtedly recall the second curtain designed by F. F. Fedorovsky for the 1934 production of *Prince Igor*. The second curtain used for the present production of *Kitezh* is so exquisitely beautiful that it almost defies description. The central section, depicting the Cathedral of the Assumption in Kitezh, is flanked by two side sections, each embroidered with a fantastic brocade suggesting the trees and flowers of the surrounding Kerzhen forests. Above, to the left and right, two dove-like angels gaze down, their serene, impassive faces surmounted by enormous haloes.

Nothing could have greater dramatic impact, nothing could be more original and at the same time more poetically endearing than the dexterous handling of this second curtain during the opening moments of the opera. After a few bars of the introduc-

tion, the central section (depicting the Cathedral) is raised, revealing Fevronia, rapt in contemplation among the flowers and beasts of the forest. One has scarcely recovered from one's surprise, when the two side sections are lifted, allowing one to gain a more comprehensive view of this forest glade. The two angels depicted on the top side sections continue to watch down for a few seconds longer, then they too withdraw, only to reappear later on to herald the closing moments of the first act.

Interestingly enough, it is one of the most impressive moments of the performance which has drawn a certain amount of comment from Soviet critics. This concerns the scene depicting the disappearance of the City of Kitezh, which in the Bolshoi version sinks beneath the waters of Lake Svetly Yar; and also the subsequent scene in which the first rays of dawn reveal the fortress walls and cupolas of the invisible city reflected in the lake, causing the traitor Grishka to lose his reason, and the Tartars he has guided there to prostrate themselves in fear. In this connection, Y. Muromtsev, writing in the May, 1966 issue of *Sovietskaya Muzyka*, drew attention to the existence in the legend of Kitezh of a number of variants concerning the "concealment of the city"; according to the first variant, it vanished under the ground, according to the second, it sank under the water, and according to the third, it became invisible, but was reflected in Lake Svetly Yar. Mr. Muromtsev maintains that Rimsky-Korsakov settled for the latter variant, and then goes on to point out that in the solution of the finale of the third act chosen by the producers of the opera "in our view, the two ends do not come together, and this leads to a logical contradiction: Kitezh has sunk into the lake, and then it is reflected in it (naturally, in an 'inverted' form) as though standing on the shore(?)".²

Be this as it may, there can be no doubt that the present production of *Kitezh* can be accounted one of the most fascinating and magnificent spectacles ever staged by the Bolshoi. It would be hard to think of any other theatrical production in the world today, which could match it in sheer visual beauty. Just to have seen it once is an experience one will remember all one's life.

² Y. Muromtsev: *Posle dolgogo zabveniya (After long oblivion)* in *Sovietskaya Muzyka* No. 5, 1966, pp. 59-60).

Valentin Kataev's "The Baby"

Kathleen W. Williams, University of Aston

Readers, who value Kataev's work, think chiefly of the series in the Collected Works where Petya, a boy from an intellectual

Odessa family, becomes the life-long friend of an orphan fisher-lad, as recounted in "Beleet parus odinoky". ("The Lonely White Sail"). This was, indeed, so successful that it led to two more long books and a story, covering two generations from about 1900 to 1945—a minor "Forsyte Saga".

Beyond that, critics are still arguing about Kataev's recent work, full of phantasies and recollections.

But Kataev wrote a jewel of a short story, published in 1929, in which he for the first time really concentrated on human relations. It is called "Rebyonok".

Polechka, a girl cleaner, who comes daily to work for a concert conductor, Ludwig, in his small city flat, is extremely shy. One day she quarrels with her landlady, who throws her out, and Ludwig, coming back late at night, finds her sleeping in the hall, resting her head on her case; he tiptoes by not to wake her. Gradually she moves into the partitioned off part of his room.

They are both the soul of discretion : when the musician has to hand her his boots to be cleaned, the following scene takes place :—

He approached the door, modestly hiding his hunting pants behind a rug; out of them stuck a not completely decent flap of his cambric shirt; and he held out to her his boots, covered with the pink powder of his galoshes. She stretched out her trembling hands towards them—from the side one might have thought that simultaneous touching of the boots brought danger of death. He jerked back his hairy fingers, before her little fingers with their sharp little nails could seize the boots. The boots fell with a clatter. He and she gasped "Oh!" She caught up the boots by their laces and quickly bore them away.

Collected Works (1956) p. 291.

It is clear from the beginning that the musician is a confirmed bachelor : he reacts strongly to the prima donna's complaints when she comes to the flat to practise her aria, with the statement : "Then you should work in a laundry, not in operetta." Meanwhile, Polechka sits in the hall on a trunk, swinging her legs and appalled at the row; but she does hear the rude allusion to herself made by the singer as a parting shot.

Time goes by. One winter's night the musician feels an unbearable tenderness towards the girl and gropes his way to her bed in the dark—but she is out, he supposes with some other girls.

Ludwig has taken to buying sweets for Polechka and, as though to explain that the singer is a great artist, despite her rudeness, he gives Polechka a ticket for the evening performance. In this, for her, unusual environment, she sees Ludwig in an evening suit for the first time and falls in love. That night she feigns ill and groans. Solicitously he gets up, questions her, is alarmed and calls in a

neighbour to give her medicine. She is galled by her lack of success and by the bitter drops of medicine she has to swallow; she cries herself off to sleep.

On the re-bound, she has an affair with a raffish hairdresser, begins to neglect her work and finally gives in her notice. Ludwig is very sorry for, as he says: "I always loved her like my own daughter",—but he lets her go.

Polechka, however, is now pregnant; and the hairdresser ignoring her protests, gets the local Citizens' Court to cite Ludwig as her seducer; even the neighbour bears unwilling witness! At first Ludwig denies the charge before the woman judge, repeating that he always loved her as a daughter. But he sees her there with the baby and, when asked if he will maintain the child, he agrees. Questioned by the judge, Polechka also agrees to go home with him. The judge sums up thus:

"It's all quite clear. You quarrelled—now you've made it up . . . and don't let me see you here again."

C.W.4 (1956) p. 305.

They go off together, quietly, and return to the flat in a carriage, supporting a large striped mattress.

I like this story because of the unexpected twists and turns in the plot, as well as the gentle humour. The court case comes as a surprise to the reader, as it certainly does to the innocent musician. And his simple acquiescence in the false situation which returns Polechka to him, is a great surprise to the hairdresser, too. It is an excellent dénouement.

The tale is also full of fine character sketches: the Tartar house-keeper who befriends Polechka, the temperamental opera singer, the lascivious, dishonest hairdresser and the busy, mistaken judge. The excellent plot is condensed into 17 pages. The emotions expressed are timeless.

Journey to Central Asia

N.G.S. Press

(St. Mary's College, Twickenham, Middlesex)

Samarkand, the Jewel of the World; Khiva, the Magnificent; heaven from earth rather than fell upon it. These are the names, Bokhara, the Noble, where it was said that light ascended into the legends and the reputations that have drawn travellers over centuries into the very heart of Asia. This is the land where empires have been born and have withered; where the armies of Alexander tramped and fought on their way to India; where the

savage whirlwind of the hordes under Genghis Khan swept away the domination of the Arabs and where Tamerlaine dreamed of making his beloved Samarkand the capital of the world. It was this romance, these legends and that history which for years had lured me, although I saw this region in circumstances far less arduous than those endured by infinitely more illustrious predecessors like Marco Polo, Sven Hedin and Fitzroy Maclean.

Leaving Moscow in the early afternoon the Ilyushin turbo-prop purred high over the immense forests of birch and pine and the meadowlands of central Russia, across the seas of grain in the collectives in the Volga basin and then south-eastwards over the empty steppes and into the night racing towards us. Then at midnight, after hours of blackness, suddenly there seemed to be millions of lights in skeins and clusters, the farms and villages scattered through the oasis around the city of Tashkent. To arrive anywhere at night is to enjoy a particular magic and walking from the aircraft in the warm wind blowing in from the desert, the air sweet with the scent of flowers, one realised that one world had been left behind and another one entered.

Tashkent

The harsh light of morning brought however a certain measure of disillusion. Tashkent was neither the ancient nor the mystic East. It was of course Asia, at its very centre, but Tashkent was, above all, representative of all that was modern, *Soviet Central Asia*. It is the ferro concrete-elevated motorway-cotton mill and chemical plant roaring proof of the remarkable transition that has been effected in fifty years after the centuries old sleep of this once caravan town on the old Silk Road to China.

Very little of old Tashkent remains, not only because of the drastic social, political and industrial changes but also following the violent earthquake of 1966. In ten seconds 300,000 people were made homeless but within two years, remarkably, most have been rehoused. Rehoused not very imaginatively, but conveniently and well, in a shimmering forest of apartment blocks with their attendant hospitals, schools and supermarkets. In the rich oasis along the Jaxartes has been created with glaring concrete and glass an industrial city the size of Glasgow.

To someone seeking the East of the Arabian Nights, Tashkent was a disappointment. But, remembering that I strive, however unsuccessfully, to lecture on the economic geography of the Soviet Union, I plunged into what Tashkent had to offer the geographer rather than the romantic. There was the micro-unit system of the residential area, the sprawling petro-chemical plant using natural gas piped in from the Ferghana Basin, the cement works based on lime-stone from the foothills of the Tien Shan. There was a morn-

ing spent in the world's biggest cotton mill, the earthworks of the nearly completed metro system, the glittering facade of the new railway station, surmounted by a huge sign reading "Colonial Peoples of the World throw off your Oppressors" (significantly written in English) and there was a performance of Rigoletto sung in Uzbek and never to be forgotten, for a variety of reasons.

But in all this brashness, modernity and efficiency, it began to dawn on me that what I had come to find was beginning to emerge—the bewildering variety of racial types on the streets and in the markets, bowlegged and felt capped Kazakhs still with the dust of the Hungry Steppe on their boots, blue eyed Ukrainians, squat Tartars, Kalmyks and breathtakingly beautiful Tadzyk girls from the mountain lands on the Afghan border.

It was obvious how much Tashkent was the crossroads of Asia and of time. I found myself one afternoon in the garden of a mosque during afternoon prayers and experienced that slightly frightening sensation when the muezzin wailed from the minaret. And here there seemed to be the quintessence of the compromise between Islam and atheistic communism, between past and present. Accompanying the cry of the muezzin and the chatter of mynah birds was the rattle of cement mixers and the rumble of heavy lorries working nearby on yet another block of flats.

Khiva

In this atmosphere of street car jangle come the chance of mild adventure. Following a late night conversation (and three carafes of Kazakh brandy) a Canadian, an American and I decided to visit Khiva, 600 miles away across the deserts. Khiva we discovered had only a fortnight before been opened to foreigners after centuries of being a closed Moslem city and fifty years of as complete a seclusion under Soviet rule. The story of our arranging of this day trip through a baffling maze of Oriental intransigence and Soviet bureaucracy is a saga in itself.

We left the hotel at 5 a.m., being driven by a sleepy and wildly erratic Uzbek boy to the airport. Mountains which had not been visible in the day time heat haze now towered up black against the rising sun. We took off over the pale green of the cotton fields around the city and very quickly we were over the Kyzil Kum, the Red Desert where millions of years of wind had ravaged and fretted the surface into tangled redges of sand and bare rock and prevented even the flimsiest mark of man. As one looked to the south over the crimson sands through the clear air of the morning 500 miles away was the great blue mountain wall along the borders of Afghanistan and Persia and far beyond that the sparkling white peaks of the High Pamirs.

After an hour and a half we were bellying in over the lushness of

the oasis of Khorezm and the mile-wide Oxus (the ancient name for the river now known as the Amu-Darya) with its long sand bars, reed beds and clumps of willow. The Oxus, where Sohrab and Rustum had fought and where Alexander had contemplated marching to the north. In the immensity of the plain space seemed to swallow everything.

At the landing strip, we were to touch again the "Sovietness" of Central Asia. The first sound to be heard as the door of the aircraft opened was the clatter of helicopters taking off for what I subsequently found to be the pipeline that was being built across the desert from the gas fields near Bukhara to the Urals and Moscow. Across the airfield was a fleet of about fifty heavy biplanes that in a month's time would begin spraying defoliant upon the cotton crop in readiness for harvesting.

But I had not come for pipelines or cotton harvests but for Khiva. The three of us were driven thirty miles through the fields of cotton, rice and maize, past the little mud houses standing in the groves of mulberries, past the Moslem cemeteries on their artificial mounds, past the children playing in the irrigation canals and past the old men in enormous flat fur hats riding donkeys.

Then before us we saw the minarets of the city out from which had once ridden the Khans with their hordes to pillage as far west as the Ukraine, south into Persia and east to China, driving back thousands of slaves, since Khiva was the major slave market of Central Asia. A long covered arcade led through the great gate into which the camels had once swung with their loads of silk, spices and tea from India and China on their way to the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Three concentric lines of wall enclosed the different parts of the city. In the outer area were the dwelling houses of the ordinary people and the shops of the copper smiths, the leather workers, the weavers of silk and a score of others. Inside the second wall were the mosques and religious schools and within the third was the soaring Ark, or stronghold, of the Khan and his harem of three hundred wives.

One can only recall fragments—the delicate green of the windows and the intricately tiled alcoves in the courtyard of the harem; the golden dome of the mausoleum of the Khans, the unfinished truncation of what was to have been the highest and most brilliant minaret in all Islam; the shimmering Tiled Minaret reaching up three hundred feet; the dark and still sinister arcade of the slave market; the intricately carved doorways; groups of silk clad women sitting and talking in the dust and everywhere the crooning and burbling of thousands of turtle doves. Other memories are more prosaic—the almost indecently delicious taste of a melon enjoyed in a temperature of 120°F and the seemingly never ending lunch taken sitting cross legged on vast cushions and consisting of

some incomprehensible but superb soup, shashliks, rice, peppers, grapes and peaches.

In the early evening we flew back to Tashkent and I shared four seats in the little Antonov airliner with an entrancing young Uzbek girl and her five children. We endeavoured to carry on a conversation with not a single word of a common language whilst the night rapidly hid the stark wastes below. Incidentally, to fly in Central Asia (or indeed anywhere in the Soviet Union) is remarkably similar to riding in a country bus. One flies with people from every race from the Caucasus to China and from Persia to the Arctic—Tartars in felt caps, Turkomans from the Kara Kum in their wide fur bonnets, soldiers, engineers, oilmen, housewives and children crammed in two and sometimes three to a seat. On one day of even more than usual heat the pilot took his seat having removed not only his tunic but also his shirt for comfort and I was served lunch by a widely smiling hostess wearing only a brassiere and the usual less than adequate Aeroflot uniform skirt. Central Asian flying is public transport in its last analysis.

Bokhara

From Tashkent we flew very early in the morning to Bokhara. Bokhara, where Marco Polo lived for three years with his uncle on their way to China, where Stoddard and Connolly met their cruel deaths in the 1840's, where for 400 years was the third greatest centre of Islamic learning. Bokhara the Noble, also the ruthless and the dominant. For me again it is a place of vivid memories. The flight across the dried up water courses and the mountains, the glide in over the grey green fields, grey with the dust blown in from the sands; the columns of mosques carved from complete teak trees which were carried here by elephants from India; the pools under the trees where once the Emir had taken tea and watched his wives bathe and where now the tanker lorries filled up with water to use in washing down the streets. I remember Soraya, the exquisite Tadzik girl who explained to me the horrors of the Emir's torture dungeons but who also took what was a most un-Soviet interest in recounting the delights and extravagances of his harem; the storks nesting precariously on the highest points of the minarets; the dark labyrinths of the bazaars in the four complicated gates of the city—the Gate of the Skull Cap Makers, the Gate of the Money Changers, the Gate of the Jewellers and the Gate of the Camel Traders; the hive of little domes of the caravanserai where the Polos had lived. There was too the almost Old Testament majesty of the Bokharan Jews, who make up a tenth of the population and who in the time since the Diaspora have lived through the vicissitudes of an existence under the Arab

fanatics, the Mongol Khans, the Moslem Emirs, the Imperial Tzars and the Communists. And towering over everything the Kalyan Minaret, the Minaret of Death, which served a triple purpose of a calling place for the faithful, a lighthouse where at night a fire burned to guide the caravans coming across the desert and from whose top criminals were hurled to their deaths into the market place.

In the desert ten miles to the north I had seen from the air the rambling development where colossal reserves of gas were being tapped and piped out to the industrial centres of European Russia and Siberia, thousands of miles to the north.

Samarkand

On the afternoon of the following day I arrived in Samarkand and drove into the city which nestles in the arms of bleak mountain ridges and is set in the oasis of the Zeravshan River, the Thrower of Gold. Past the hillocks of loess which cover the ruins of Maracanda, the city destroyed by Alexander and which itself stood upon the ruins of one of the first cities built by Neolithic man 7,000 years ago.

Samarkand is dominated by four vast architectural ensembles—the Gur Emir, the tomb of Tamerlaine whose empire had stretched from Egypt to the Ganges and from the Volga to Arabia; the Registan, a wide open sided square formed by three religious schools and which was described by Lord Curzon as “the noblest square in the world”; the Shaikh Zindeh, the Tomb of the Living King, where the nephew of the Prophet lies not dead but, according to legend, sleeping, his green domed sepulchre surrounded by the mausoleums of the wives, counsellors and generals of the conqueror. And lastly the gigantic, earthquake ruined, Bibi Khanum mosque, the biggest mosque ever built and fashioned from rare and precious materials at the command of Tamerlaine as a present to his young and favourite wife, Bibi Khanum.

These all are set among irrigated gardens and groves somewhat apart from the violently contrasting modern city with its inevitable flats and factories producing textiles, television equipment and canned fruit. Thus the old city retains and will continue to retain the feeling of its glorious past. Standing on a hill outside the town where Ulug Beg, the astronomer-king, had carved out an enormous transit from the solid rock, it was strange to recall that this beautiful city was the creation of a man who everywhere else destroyed and who ransacked the world he had conquered for materials and craftsmen in order to build a capital whose wonders would surpass all others and who populated it with scholars, poets, artists and workers whom he abducted for the sole service of Samarkand and Tamerlaine.

The days I spent there are so full of impressions that it is possible to summarise only a few—walking to the Gur Emir in the last of the sunset to watch the orange light reflected from the high fluted tiled dome; watching the wood carvers at work in their tiny shops; looking up into the high shattered dome of the Bibi Khanum mosque where the swallows were nesting; climbing the long staircase into the Shaikh Zindeh where it is said that only a person without guilt is able to count the steps (and losing count twice) and driving through miles of orange, peach and apricot groves to the edge of the brown unending steppe.

From Samarkand, again in the late afternoon we began the long flight back to Moscow. Within minutes we were climbing through the dust laden air and beginning the thousand mile long stretch of complete void all the way up to the Volga, over the sands of the Kyzil Kum, the frightful stretches of the lunar like purple and white saline steppe, the salt encrusted shoreline of the violently emerald Aral Sea and the black sands in the basin of the Ural River, the accepted boundary between two continents. And in all that emptiness only two fragile looking pieces of the work of people, the undeviating line of gas pipeline and the single track of railway which runs from Saratov on the Volga to Central Asia, now far behind our wings, golden in the light of the dying sun.

I have deliberately set out in this article to give an essentially personal picture of my experiences and I hope that those who expected more are not too frustrated. I have not attempted to describe how deliberate has been the efforts to modernise an area that had been unchanged for centuries, or how in place of disease, ignorance and lethargy has been created a region that enjoys a standard of living and welfare infinitely higher than in any other part of Asia outside Japan and where, as far as I could discover, there is a complete absence of discrimination between the vastly differing races and culture in such things as housing, employment and facilities. Not least of the fascinating features of Soviet Central Asia is the close juxtaposition of the very old and unchanged, and the modern and rapidly changing. In Samarkand it is only a mile from the stillness of the Gur Emir to the flats, supermarkets and heavy traffic of the Yuri Gagarin Prospekt and one realises that they are not worlds or times apart but two worlds and times intricately bound up in each other.

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Geoffrey Marr Vevers, F.R.C.S.

Geoffrey Vevers was a devoted friend of the SCR and served it in very many ways. The archives do not disclose when he formally

became a member, but during the pre-war years he was closely associated with the Society, at a time when he was also carrying out his pioneer work in organising the official exchanges of animals between the London and Moscow Zoos. He became a member of the Executive Committee in 1938, and served for two years as Vice-Chairman before taking on, in 1940, the exacting post of Honorary Treasurer.

When, on being appointed Secretary in 1937, I first came to know Geoffrey, the Society was housed in three small rooms in Gower Street, and its activities were modest, though it too had done much pioneering work in an atmosphere which it is today hard to describe. The fervour of the wartime alliance, and the crudities of the cold war, were yet to come, but both these relationships were founded on recognition of the strength and importance of the USSR. When Geoffrey was doing some of his most valuable early work for Anglo-Soviet relations, the USSR was largely ignored as a great power, and realisation of its achievements was confined, apart from a comparatively small number of political enthusiasts, to those few specialists who took the trouble to find out the work which was being done in spheres where they were competent to judge. The work of experts like Geoffrey Ververs in their own fields was enormously valuable in forging links between the two countries. Even if these links seem, in comparison with the frequent and close interchanges of today, few, fragile and intermittent, in the then climate of opinion they represented a remarkable achievement, and to engage in establishing them needed vision and courage.

One of the most important tasks which Geoffrey helped the Society to carry out was the foundation of the *Anglo-Soviet Journal* in substantially its present form. Attempts had been made since the foundation of the Society in 1924, to produce a regular periodical, but each version, launched with high hopes, had expired after a few numbers. It was Geoffrey's determination, combined with considerable powers of organisation and improvisation, which enabled a regular publication to appear. This achievement was specially remarkable because the new *Anglo-Soviet Journal* was launched in the unpropitious year of 1940, when, in addition to the distrust with which the USSR was popularly regarded before the wartime alliance of 1941, publications of any kind in Britain laboured under great technical difficulties because of the war. It was therefore an act of faith to launch a completely new publication.

Anybody who has had anything to do with producing a journal knows how very many aspects have to be considered apart from editorial work, itself no light task at the best of times, but doubly harassing in wartime, when difficulties of communication are added to the normal tardiness of contributors in producing copy. In 1940

we were particularly exercised by problems of distribution, and felt that it was essential that we should find an independent publisher to issue the Journal on behalf of the Society and look after this aspect. I well remember a visit to Messrs. Macmillan, at their historic office in St. Martin Street (now sadly demolished). We were most courteously received in the partners' impressive booklined room by, I believe, the then Mr. Daniel Macmillan, but in spite of Geoffrey's charm and eloquence the proposition was gracefully declined. Fortunately a smaller house, Messrs. Lindsay Drummond, undertook the task and carried it on for some years until the Society was in a position to undertake distribution itself.

Geoffrey had to deal with all the problems of wartime editorship at a time when his own work at the Zoological Society in London and Whipsnade was doubly onerous because of bombing and wartime shortages. He managed nevertheless to produce the regular publication which the Society had always wanted, surmounting triumphantly all the obstacles, conjuring up supplies of paper and disciplining contributors with friendly persistence.

After the Nazi invasion of the USSR, he undertook yet another responsibility by devoting much time and effort to the collection and despatch of medical supplies for the USSR. He was one of the very first, in those hot summer days of 1941, to realise the importance of speedy assistance, and his medical knowledge was naturally invaluable in the selection of goods and equipment. His efforts, combined with those of the Joint Committee for Soviet Aid, resulted in the flow of consignments being started well before the Aid-to-Russia Fund started by Mrs. (now Lady) Churchill got under way. In this activity he worked closely with the Soviet Ambassador and Madame Maisky, and later with Professor S. M. Sarkisov, the resident London representative appointed by the Soviet Red Cross Societies.

After the war, it was on Geoffrey, as Honorary Treasurer that much of the work fell in raising funds which enabled the SCR to occupy a building of its own, and to move in 1947 from its cramped quarters in Gower Street to Kensington Square. The new premises in Brixton Road are the direct result of his untiring efforts to provide a home worthy of the Society's work.

Throughout his life, Geoffrey Vevers regarded the Soviet Union with admiration, affection and understanding, and maintained a lively interest in Anglo-Soviet co-operation. His warm humanity was all-embracing, but this was a cause to which he specially devoted his intelligence and his heart.

JUDITH TODD

On hearing the sad news of the death of Dr. Geoffrey Vevers in January, 1970, we felt compelled to say a few words in memory of this remarkable man.

Our first meeting with Dr. Vevers was in the early thirties, when

we came to London as diplomatic representatives of the USSR. Our immediate impression of him was most favourable. Since then forty years have passed, but with every new year this first impression has strengthened and deepened.

Dr. Geoffrey Vevers was a wise, modest and good man, harmoniously combining the qualities of a scientist with those of a progressive public figure. The thirties were difficult years in Anglo-Soviet relations, but it was precisely during this period that Dr. Vevers strove for closer Anglo-Soviet understanding and was actively engaged in the work of the Society for Cultural Relations. His contribution during the Second World War was particularly important in the development of Red Cross work. When we finally returned to the Soviet Union in 1943 our relations with Dr. Vevers were not broken for right up to the last days of his life we continued a friendly correspondence. From the pages of his letters we always felt the sincerity of a true friend of the Soviet people and an outstanding personality of our epoch.

ACADEMICIAN IVAN MAISKY AND AGNES MAISKY.

Book Reviews

Memories of Lenin, Nadezhda Krupskaya

Simultaneously published by Panther Books, paperback, 8s., and Lawrence and Wishart, Library edition, 30s., 1970.

From the plain opening words 'Vladimir Ilyich arrived in St. Petersburg in the autumn of 1893' the story sweeps in an ever broadening stream to the final, triumphant sentence: 'A workers' and peasants' government was formed, a Council of People's Commissars was set up, the chairman of which was Lenin.'

This book is of interest both to the student of history with its accounts of the polemics and theoretical disagreements of that pre-revolutionary period, and just as much to the general reader for whom the story of underground activity, imprisonments and escapes will prove as exciting as any thriller, while the intimate portrait of Lenin himself shows not only his single-minded dedication to his principles but the warm humanity of his nature that so endeared him to those around him.

Nadezhda Krupskaya was Lenin's wife and constant companion. She shared with him the difficulties and dangers of 'illegality' and herself played a leading part in the revolutionary movement. With her, on their walks in the mountains, he could discuss organisational difficulties and theoretical problems, with her he could relax on bicycle rides through the countryside and, whenever necessary, rely on her appraisal of people and events. As she puts it :

‘Usually when we were living in Russia I could move about much more freely than Vladimir Ilyich and speak with a much larger number of people. By the two or three questions he would put I already understood what he wanted to know and looked into everything. Even now I have not outlived this habit of mentally formulating my impressions for Ilyich.’

Krupskaia’s ‘Memories’ are so wholly centred on Lenin and on the importance of the cause for which they were fighting that she barely speaks of herself. A casual sentence in brackets, ‘In August, 1896, I also was in jail’, is all she says about her own arrest when describing methods of secret correspondence with those in prison. But one sentence summarises what above all else shines through the pages of this absorbing book: ‘The living tree of life in which Vladimir Ilyich’s interest was so keen.’ Through its pages one comes upon unexpected examples—when Lenin, out hunting in Siberia, did not shoot a fox because ‘he was so beautiful’; or Lenin’s interest in ‘living London’ when they came to England in 1902. ‘He loved going on long rides about the town on top of an omnibus. He liked the movement of this huge commercial city. The quiet squares, the detached houses with their separate entrances and shining windows, adorned with greenery, the drives frequented only by highly polished broughams were much in evidence—but tucked away nearby, the mean little streets, inhabited by the London working people, where lines with washing hung across the street, and pale children played in the gutter—these sights could not be seen from the bus top. In such districts we went on foot, and observing these howling contrasts in richness and poverty, Ilyich would mutter through clenched teeth, and in English: “Two nations!”’

There are excellent thumbnail sketches of the various personalities, such as Plekhanov or Zazulich, and descriptions of places—as for instance the few sentences about Paris suffice to give a vivid picture of their life: ‘The apartment was light and spacious and even had mirrors over the fireplaces . . . but did not at all fit in with our mode of life and the “furniture” we brought from Geneva. The contempt with which the concierge looked upon our white deal tables, common chairs and stools was worth seeing . . .’

This is a book that will certainly be enjoyed by all who are interested in the Soviet Union as, besides its other qualities, it so clearly portrays the political environment into which the new Socialist State was born.

SOFKA SKIPWITH.

Problems of Modern Aesthetics: Collection of Articles

Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1969.

This well bound and excellently designed book contains thirteen

essays by Soviet literary specialists and aestheticians. The tenor of the essays is best conveyed by the first contribution, by Alexei Metchenko, on the basic principles underlying present day Soviet literature. Although there might be objections, on the part of some readers, to the occasionally rather unscientific and arbitrary manner of argument, this essay is an honest attempt to explain what Socialist Realism is about, and how it should work.

The thorny question of the relationship between national and international cultures is broached by two of the other writers, Lomidze and Trofimov, not awfully successfully in the case of the latter—since the matter of publication priorities for the national republics of the USSR is not dealt with.

Nikolai Silayev and Viktor Romanenko contribute articles on labour as an aesthetic feature in Soviet literature, and on the beauty of nature and natural description as approached by Soviet writers. As even a casual reader of Soviet literature will be aware, the relationship of the artist to work and to nature is crucial in Soviet cultural discussions. The remaining essays in the book deal with the relationship between both Critical and Socialist Realism and what all the writers call “Modernism”.

The point of these essays, as of a contribution on the concept of the Positive Hero, seems to be to answer various critical objections over the years to the promulgation of Socialist Realism. In effect, this turns the book from an explanation of Soviet aesthetics into a series of refutations of anticipated hostile outbursts. It is at least interesting in such a context as this to see discussed Proust, Kafka and Joyce (albeit they are rejected as “Modernists”!), and interesting for the student of the European literary scene to discover what place these three disparate writers occupy in the Soviet world view. This section of the book provides a fruitful field for those interested in the divergences of view amongst Marxist critics, both inside the Soviet Union and in other countries. For example, several of the contributors cross swords with a Marxist theoretician well known in the West, Ernest Fischer.

From the point of view of translation, one's sympathies must go out to Progress Publishers' team, faced as they were with the task of rendering into intelligible and readable English what must have been extremely complicated Russian originals. It is a pity that they have been only partly successful in this task; there is all too often an irregular mixture of linguistic registers which goes ill with the academic, nay scientific, mood of the book. It would have been a blessing also for the English reader had the translators been able to break down the Russian periods into more manageable units.

From an ideological point of view, it is a pity to come across, in an otherwise encouraging book rich in interesting footnotes and references, occasional lapses into turgid attempts to prove a point merely

by quoting lists of names and book titles. There is also a disastrous failure to define terms, like "Modernism", the elasticity of which from essay to essay renders them almost meaningless.

For all its faults, this is a book no-one who lacks Russian, but has an interest in Soviet culture, should be without. The scope of this collection of essays has breadth and historical depth, commenting not only on contemporary Soviet phenomena, but also on the Russian classics, and on European literature past and present.

C. G. BEARNE

University of Sussex.

Masterstvo Russkikh Klassikov

Sovetskii Pistaet', Moscow, 1969.

'Masterstvo' in this context is fairly difficult to render into English and, as one gathers from the introductory essay, rather difficult to define exactly in Russian. The book, in fact consists of eleven essays, contributed by contemporary Soviet literary specialists, and each dealing with an aspect of the works of a great Russian writer. Although some of the material presented is a distillation of other longer monographs, there is something here for every serious student of Russian nineteenth century literature. The aim of the collection is to explore 'mastery' in style, and in this connection an interesting distinction is made between style, 'the defined general principles of organisation of artistic form which proceed naturally from defined general peculiarities of ideological content', and manner, 'the methods of organising historical form, peculiar to the writings of one writer in particular—sometimes of one period of his work'. In some of the essays, however, it is difficult to decide whether the author is discussing the first or the second, or aware of the distinction.

The arrangement of the essays is in the chronological order of their subject matter, moving from the romantic works of Zhukovskii and Karamzin to the drama at the end of the century and to the short stories of Chekhov. Thus the second essay in the collection, by O. A. Derzhavina, deals with the medieval *novella* and in what ways these plots have been adapted by Russian writers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Though the springboard of Derzhavina's discussion is itself interesting, namely Russian reactions to the European medieval *novella*, what she has to say about Leskov and Bunin is worth attention also.

We then move through the century (by-passing, strangely enough, Pushkin) and arrive at Gogol' and an article by Professor S. I. Mashinskii, some of which one has read before elsewhere, a fact which in no way invalidates its presence here. Mashinskii gives an inimitably thorough and serious study of the mechanics of Gogol's prose.

The following essay by A. V. Chicherin takes as its subject Turgenev's prose. In the terms of the division made above, Chicherin examines first of all the author's 'style' and the process of its development, and then, similarly, his 'manner'. It is an interesting essay, a little woolly, but delightfully written, full of such quotes as 'Dialogue is the chief instrument in the orchestra of a Turgenev novel'. A point also worth bringing to the reader is Chicherin's sensitive attitude to Turgenev's handling of Time—a very 'modern' one. Paired with Chicherin's contribution is an essay by L. A. Ozerov, also on Turgenev. It is a specialist essay which could probably only hope to find publication in a book like this. Of great interest to the student of Turgenev, it deals in depth with his work, *Stikhotvorenie v proze*.

Poetry succeeds prose with an essay by V. N. Kasatkina on Tyutchev. Although the subject, 'Music and Painting in Tyutchev's verse', seems narrow, this is in fact a thoroughgoing examination of Tyutchev's poetry. It is only a pity that more is not said of the great influence exerted by Tyutchev on later poets, Blok, for example.

Our course through the nineteenth century then moves from poetry to drama, and to the plays of A. N. Ostrovsky. I. L. Vishnevskaya writes on his 'mastery' as a dramatist. She is intent on setting Ostrovsky in an historical perspective and thereby defining his contribution to later developments in the Russian theatre. Western knowledge of Russian drama all too often accepts unquestioningly the enormous gulf between Gogol's *Revizor* and Chekhov's plays, so that it is salutary to be reminded of Ostrovsky's existence and then to be presented with an examination of his status as a representative of the stage of transition from one set of dramatic conventions to another.

In line with the earlier startling changes of focus we pass to Dostoevsky and a very long essay (a condensed book?) by V. Kirpotin on the individual and society in the author's novel. This is really a long and detailed study which could interest all Dostoevsky students. Of very great interest is Kirpotin's implied suggestion of the very close relationship between Dostoevsky's heroes and the picaresque anti-heroes of Western European literature of the 'thirties, 'forties and 'fifties of this century.

This is followed by an almost equally long essay by N. Ardens on L. Tolstoy. This is a truly enormous subject. Ardens seems in two minds as to whether he is writing on Tolstoy's works in general or on the more specific subject—the literary heroes—which is suggested by the title. Cutting through the layers of waffle, one finds an interesting discussion of the process of creating the main characters in Tolstoy's novels and the subsequent relationship between author and character. There is much of interest en passant, the significance of the characters' names, for example.

F. G. Biryukov follows this with an essay with similar characteristics to two of the earlier ones. It is a both specialist essay and on an author unjustly ignored both in the Soviet Union and overseas, V. G. Korolenko. It is a specialist study in that it looks in detail at one work only, *Reka igraet*. Once again, however, there is much to interest the student with curiosity—many sides are shown by Biryukov of this writer he justly describes as a ‘courageous citizen, a convinced democrat, original thinker, strict realist, and master of wonderful painting in words’.

The concluding essay is a brilliant contribution by E. A. Polotskaya on the “Internal Irony of Chekhov’s Short Stories and novellas”. Polotskaya dissects the stories from all angles over more than fifty pages. No student of Chekhov should fail to be delighted at this tour de force.

This collection brings together specialised opinions on specialised topics (the Russian printing is 10,000 copies only) and does so in an interesting light: namely that of an extended examination of literary technique and style. Yet the framework holds very loosely what are really disparate and independent monographs.

C. G. BEARNE
University of Sussex.

Dostoevsky: Child and Man in his works, by William Woodin Rowe.

New York: New York University Press.

London: University of London Press Ltd., pp. xii + 242. 1968. 70s.

William Woodin Rowe is Assistant Professor in the Slavic department of New York University. The young scholarly author has an excellent knowledge of Russian literature and language and has taken as his thesis a very detailed and learned study of Dostoevsky’s attitude to and treatment of children in his novels. Following a brief introduction Mr. Rowe discusses, in part I entitled *The genesis of feeling*:—the child as victim—the child as adult. Part II deals with *the child as mental image* and includes: the child in memory—the child in dreams, visions, hallucinations and illusions—the child as religious ideal—the child in hypothesis. Finally in part III we have *the child as modifier* covering: the adult as child—the child in descriptive devices.

Mr. Rowe is very erudite in his sources. He is well acquainted with the work of Leonid Grossman, who died a couple of years ago in Moscow at an advanced age and who was already in 1917, when only in his late twenties, a recognised authority on Dostoevsky. The present author quotes the great American critic George Steiner, the writer Magarshack, the well-known American Profes-

sor Simmons and various other sources dealing with Dostoevsky. Curiously however, he omits the most creative critique of them all, the famous study of Tolstoi and Dostoevsky published by Dmitry Merezhkovski in 1909, and which is still unsurpassed in its psychological insight of these two geniuses and in its fine writing.

Mr. Rowe is somewhat over-pedantic in constantly using, in his English text, the word "rebyenok", stating that it means both "child" and "baby" and that there is, in Russian, no equivalent for the latter. But there is the expression "rebyenochek", which is the tender diminutive of "rebyenok": there is also "mladenetz", as in Lermontov's famous lullaby "Spi, mladenetz moi prekrasnyi" (sleep my beautiful baby) and furthermore "maluitka", the "little one".

It is not correct to say that "Brothers Karamazov" was planned as a novel about children. It is well known that this great work was intended to portray Alyosha's life and work in a trilogy and that Dostoevsky's death only enabled the first part to be written. Admittedly, children do play a big part in all Dostoevsky's work and his two great creations, Alyosha in "Brothers Karamazov" and Prince Myshkin in "Idiot" are childlike, and by deep insight, supremely wise. But to assemble all references to children's traits out of context is rather to miss the balance of a very great writer and make him often appear mawkishly sentimental. Describing, in ever growing progression, in the first chapter, the sufferings of little children in the subject's work gives a masochistic picture of hell without the relief of Dostoevsky's faith and Christian redemption.

Dostoevsky has had many detractors, in the 19th century and in our own time. Mr. Rowe quotes the opinion of V. Nabokov who describes him as "a much over-rated, sentimental and gothic novelist"; Mr. Rowe may not be aware of the verdict of Ivan Bunin which was "he puts Christ in all his boulevard (i.e. trashy) novels". But both the great writers Nabokov and Bunin are notorious iconoclasts.

The author's very valuable contribution to the understanding of Dostoevsky's purpose, whilst unavoidably fragmentary, will be a rich source of material for the complete and detailed study of Dostoevsky which is yet to come. The "cruel" talent of Dostoevsky has provided literary crumbs on which critics and novelists of all nations have been feeding for over a century.

CATHERINE RABINOVITCH.

P. A. Crowther—a Bibliography of Works in English on early Russian History to 1800
Oxford, 1969, £3.

Mr. Crowther has performed a very useful service by providing us with a bibliography on Russian history which supplements that of D. M. Shapiro covering the period 1801-1917.

Crowther's intention is "to encourage students of Russian history, at whatever level, to turn their attention to this earlier history . . . in the belief that only by doing so can they fully understand the more recent developments of tsarist and Soviet history". The coverage of the bibliography includes periodical materials as well as books, but omits British state papers and some more popular works of little scholarly or research value, as well as doctoral dissertations and unpublished material. Altogether, however, the coverage is good; there are well over 2,000 items included. Particularly useful is the fact that Crowther includes references to the views of the more important works. The material is presented in a clear and easily accessible fashion with very helpful introductory guidance to each section of the bibliography and a useful index.

This publication is an important acquisition for all serious students of Russian history and helps us to see how much material is already available for those who have no Russian. It should certainly help to achieve the intention the compiler has expressed.

R. E. F. SMITH

University of Birmingham.

Asia, by Hadlow and Abbott,

University of London Press, 294 pp., 18s.

Hadlow and Abbott's *Asia* is a school text forming Book 3 of the London Regional Geographies Series. Two chapters of the book, comprising some 40 pages, are devoted to the U.S.S.R.

In the first of these chapters the authors deal with the state as a whole and thus give a great deal of information on European Russia as well as on Asiatic U.S.S.R.

A short historical background is given, then follow brief systematic accounts of physical features, climate, vegetation, soils, and agriculture, and a much fuller account of Soviet industry. Though the text deals with the whole U.S.S.R. it is only for agriculture and industry that the maps include European Russia. The textual information is extremely detailed, and constant recourse to a good atlas is necessary merely to follow the text, though this is not a major fault. Certainly in this one chapter the authors have been able to cram a tremendous amount of material. Because of the rapidity with which they become outdated, few statistics are included but the extent of growth during the Soviet period is shown in concrete terms for a number of important industries and for agriculture.

The second chapter deals with the Soviet Central Asiatic Republics, and with Western Siberia, Eastern Siberia, and the Far East. The individual coverage is slight—the Turkmen S.S.R. and the Uzbek S.S.R. together fill but a single page—but again one

must say that within their space limits the authors have packed a great deal, including a map for each region.

These chapters on the U.S.S.R. cannot be called light reading, but teachers requiring a framework for a school U.S.S.R. course or detailed factual material for G.C.E. students will undoubtedly find them useful.

K. A. WILKINS,
Furzedown College of Education.

In Russia, by Inge Morath and Arthur Miller

Secker and Warburg, Moscow. 1969, £5.25.

Architecture and Monuments, M. Ilyin

Translated by Bernard Meares (Progress Publishers).

Time was when a Soviet visa was a passport to minor literary fame. The books used to write themselves; Chapter I. How the author managed after three years to get a visa. Chapter II. The Journey in which the author experiences strange feelings on crossing the frontier. Chapter III. Meetings with Intourist and first glimpses of old women carrying hods of bricks. For the rest there would be price lists (oranges at five quid apiece or whatever), unsmiling Russian faces, nice Metro, slow hotel service, churches packed with all the old women not on bricklaying duty, Victorian morals, lovely ballet, etc. *ad nauseam*. As time went on it got more difficult to make the hard covers with the same material presented as if it were the first handfuls of moondust, but the weeklies could always use the odd two thousand words on the Journalist v Intourist sensational contest, and one way and another the latter, if it didn't always win hands down, left the journalist at least a bit punch-drunk. What bliss to see them bite the dust; fearless Levin who could in those days claim to be the only member of the audience who understood the "real" meaning of Mayakovsky's "Bedbug" (and this without knowing a word of Russian); van der Post there was also, who managed on a journey from Sheremetievo Airport to Moscow's National Hotel, to catch a glimpse of "a flicker of fire and shape of flame", which it seemed was the Novo-Dyevichy Convent seen through liberal (and presumably telescopically X-ray) eyes. John Osborne created like fun because he couldn't find anywhere to put his electric shaver, and later we had John Wain discovering the Soviet Writers' Union. Heady days!

The students of course put a stop to all that. What with actually living up there on Lenin Hills, protected from Intourist and the need to make quick judgements, they soon turned out a body of descriptive literature that seemed to be about a different country altogether. Gooding's "The Catkin and the Icicle", Feifer's "Justice in Moscow", and even the weaker Taubman's "View from Lenin Hills," rapidly gobbled up the territory just when I was waiting for

David Frost or Simon Dee to fall horse over tip on the steps of the Bolshoi.

But now, as from the dead, literature is fighting back. Mr. Arthur Miller, an undoubted writer has returned having gone the full fifteen rounds, and from what one reads, is still comparatively sane and intelligible. Comparatively that is, with his tricky start, when he declares that he and his photographer wife aim to report on "the images which underlie the Russian cultural consciousness". Which is perhaps his writer's way of saying that his wife took the pictures and he wrote the commentary. Not her fault that the colour supplements have reduced the status of her art to something we throw out with the beer-bottles on Monday, and not necessarily his that the captions real like a *Tatler* description of a literary "point-to-point". "Tea with Mr. and Mrs. Ilya Ehrenburg." "Backstage at the Akademichesky Theatre", and suchlike, remind us of our dear family snapshot albums; but at five guineas a throw!!

But to be fair, and with Arthur Miller one must be, for his lapses are never of integrity, this is a highly intelligent account of experiences by an extraordinarily perceptive observer. He is fortunately content with half-truth, when the full truth is simply not discoverable, but it is always a deeply explored half-truth, and he never resorts to flip judgements. There is no evidence in him of that idiot wariness in the face of everything, by which the mentally limited conceal their disabilities from themselves. Miller is not the man to strip the emperor's clothes. He lacks that essential contemporary arrogance.

The few mistakes there are would have mattered less had the captions been less informative. Thus the pretty picture of the Kremlin and Historical Museum (pp. 146-147) is taken not "through the Art Nouveau Grills of the Metropole Hotel", but from the restaurant of the Hotel National. Still it means they almost certainly had a better meal. The "immense apartment house typical of the modern City" was unfortunately built by Iofan in 1930, and one naughty story has it that Beria's deputy Avvakumov once appropriated several square metres of all the apartments above his own for the sake of a chimney for his charcoal grill. He liked shashlyk you see. Not even Kochetov would call that "typical".

It is almost with relief that one turns from all this fine writing to the deadpan style of Ilyin which is only heightened by some eccentric translation and notes by Bernard Meares. Published in Russian in 1963 with only indices translated, it was the only well-informed publication which went beyond the standard itineraries. Now it has a more modern appearance, better pictures, and constitutes, in spite of the oddities in the English ("rustless steel", "Apparition" for "Epiphany") a fascinating account of the development of the City's architecture written, though not entirely successfully, in the form of

itineraries. It should give the visitor every chance now to understand the appearance of the city in relation to its medieval past and the various historical events, which as the centre of the Russian state it shaped, and by which as a living structure where human beings called Muscovites have lived out their seldom easy lives, it was shaped.

I say it *should* help the visitor, because although it is marked as having been published in 1968, it is so far unavailable in England. At the end of the book, Progress Publishers indicate that they would be glad to have the readers' opinion of this book and its translation and design, and any comments and suggestions. Well I have one suggestion that covers all that, which is to say that the beefiest man in Progress should put on a pair of the heaviest boots available, and wander up the road to Smolensk Square and boot whoever is the responsible official in *Mezhdunarodnaya Kniga*, where it hurts, until enough copies of this excellent book are sent to flood the English market.

RICHARD COOK.

Leningrad, Yelena Doroshinskaya, Vadim Kruchina
Guidebook 297 pp. *Novosti Press Agency Publishing House*,
Moscow.

Distributed in UK by Central Books, 37 Grays Inn Road, London,
W.C.1 (1969), 20s.

The present volume can be recommended without reservation for all intending travellers to Leningrad, as well as those who have been there. The amount of information it contains is quite staggering—for example, the exact number of expositions at the State Hermitage and its store-rooms (2,502,949 in 1964), the exact length of the Neva River (a total of 74 kilometres, 13 of them being within the city limits), as well as the width of the river in the city (between 350 and 650 metres) and the speed at which it flows, and the total number of trains which operate daily on the Leningrad Underground Railway (1,820) together with their average operational speed (over 40 km/hr), and maximum authorised speed (75 km/hr).

The pages dealing with the heroic endurance of the people of Leningrad during the period of the 900-day siege of 1941-1944 are particularly moving. There is also an excellent section on the Surroundings of Leningrad. The book is copiously illustrated, and some of the colour photographs are quite exquisite.

M. LAVERY,
University of Leeds.

Russians Observed, by John Lawrence
Hodder & Stoughton, 191 pp., 30s.

Some graduate preparing his Ph.D. thesis on English anti-Soviet

literature might well put this book into the I-love-the-Russians-but-hate-the-communists class and the author as the you-can't-fool-me-I-have-been-there-three-times type. He is in fact a former editor of the *Britansky Soyuznik*, a magazine published during the last war by the British Embassy in the Soviet Union. Some years later he became religious and is now editor of the *Frontier*, "a quarterly magazine which treats secular matters from a Christian point of view". He is also, or was at the time of writing, the Treasurer of Gt. Britain-U.S.S.R. Association.

He starts disarmingly by assuring the readers that this book is not intended to be an "anatomy of the U.S.S.R.", it is merely a personal account of the Russian people, seen at eye-level. And true enough, for the most part it remains a hotchpotch of travelogue trivialities, with special emphasis on churches and religion. Did you know that Rimsky-Korsakov's church music lacks that meretricious quality that mars so much of his other works? Or: "It might be too much to say that, now Stalin is gone, new styles in dress go with new styles of thought. But it is the well-dressed, those whose clothes express their personalities who will make the free Russia of the next generation. The Russian revolutionaries of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were frumps. Those who are now making a new Russia are anything but frumps". The author may well know a great deal about Christianity but he certainly shows no sign of having grasped an even elementary article on Marxism which in a concluding chapter devoted to prophesy he loftily consigns to extinction; the Russian people shall at last rid themselves of communists and return—yes, you have guessed it—to the faith of their fathers, Greek orthodox Christianity. This and more, much more, with a chapter on Romania to boot, a country which though nothing to do with Russia or the Russians has also benefited from one of Sir John's visits.

L. CROME.

Ransome on Lenin

Arthur Ransome, best known for his children's books, met Lenin when a journalist at the birth of the Soviet Union. Ransome discusses the situation in England with Ramsey Macdonald, Colonel Robins and Daniel De Leon. Returning home he reflects upon the kind of man he has met:

More than ever, Lenin struck me as a happy man. Walking home from the Kremlin, I tried to think of any other man of his calibre who had had a similar joyous temperament. I could think of none. This little, bald-headed, wrinkled man, who tilts his chair this way and that, laughing over one thing or another, ready any

minute to give serious advice to any who interrupt him to ask for it, advice so well reasoned that it is to his followers far more compelling than any command, every one of his wrinkles is a wrinkle of laughter, not of worry. I think the reason must be that he is the first great leader who utterly discounts the value of his own personality. He is quite without personal ambition. More than that, he believes, as a Marxist, in the movement of the masses which, with or without him, would still move. His whole faith is in the elemental forces that move people, his faith in himself is merely his belief that he justly estimates the direction of those forces. He does not believe that any man could make or stop the revolution which he thinks inevitable. If the Russian revolution fails, according to him, it fails only temporarily, and because of forces beyond any man's control. He is consequently free with a freedom no other great man has ever had. It is not so much what he says that inspires confidence in him. It is this sensible freedom, this obvious detachment. With his philosophy he cannot for a moment believe that one man's mistake might ruin all. He is, for himself at any rate, the exponent, not the cause, of the events that will be for ever linked with his name.*

* From "Notes on Conversations with Lenin" in "Six Weeks in Russia in 1919". George Allen and Unwin by courtesy of the publisher.



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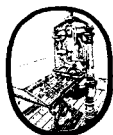
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AGM

The AGM will be held on Saturday, 23rd May, at 3 p.m. until 5.30 p.m. at the Cavendish Hotel, 78 Lancaster Gate, London, W.2.

Followed by a film show and refreshments at the Soviet Embassy for those attending the Meeting.



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Members of affiliated organisations are entitled to services which include the supply of information, visual aids, use of the reference library, recorded and sheet music, as well as the facilities provided by the libraries of the Universities of Essex and Surrey, with which we have special arrangements. The Visual Aids and Information Departments charge according to the time spent on selection or research.

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Priority will be given to affiliated organisations to receive a limited number of invitations to selective functions arranged by the Society, such as special receptions, etc.

We should like to add, however, that the Society exists not only for the benefit of members, but also in the wider context to help to improve cultural and scientific relations between Britain and the Soviet Union, towards which subscriptions can play an important part.

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